Warning: Opinion Polls Make You Conservative

Henry Fairlie

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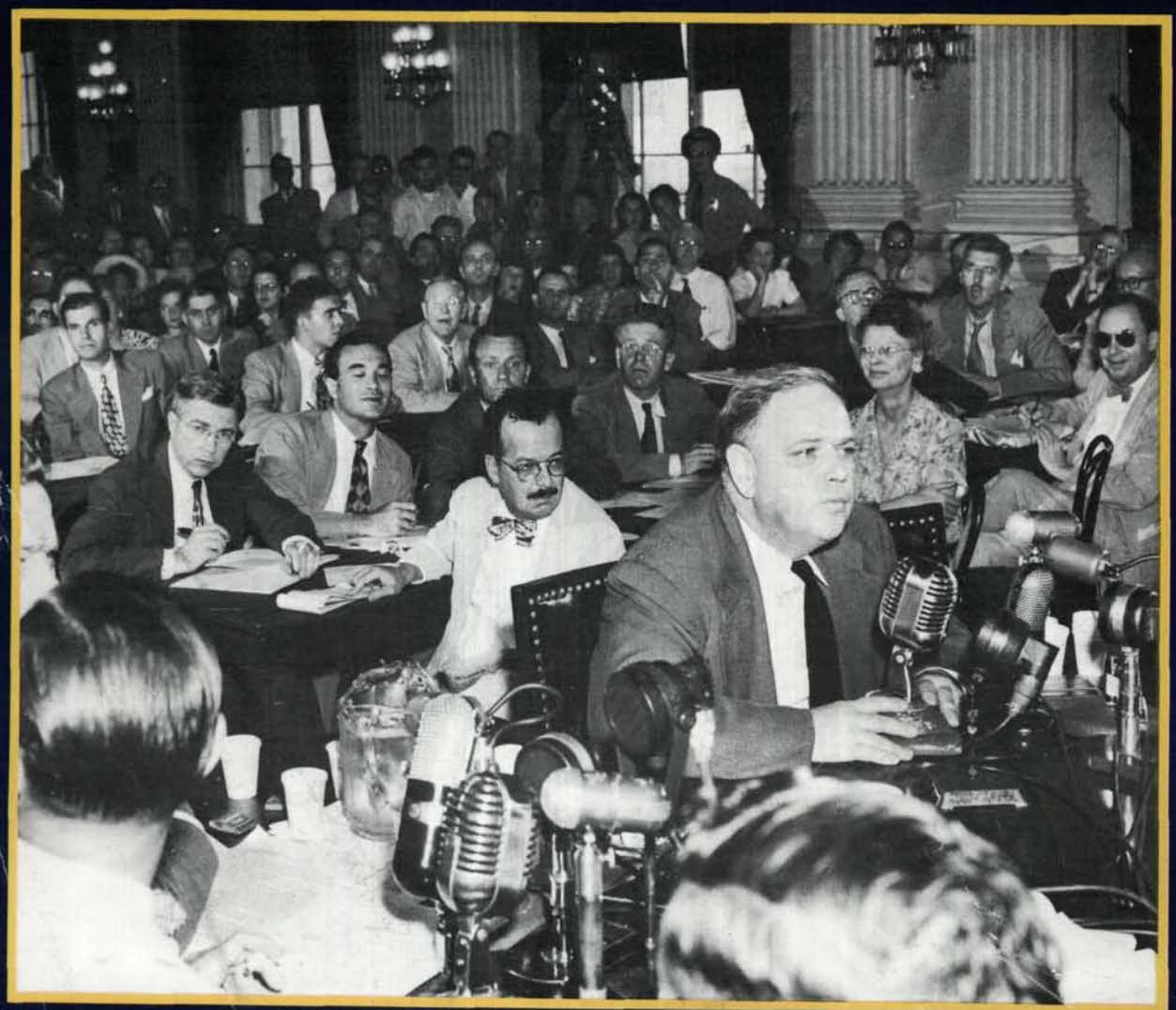

HUAC, August 25, 1948

Find the perjurer in this picture.

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TRB

from Washington
April 8, 1978

Tax Time

Of all the rituals of American democracy I think the annual self-flagellation of citizens in filling out their income tax forms (deadline April 15) is the most impressive. I suppose nobody hates to pay taxes more than I do. But I go through my Form 1040 once a year, by custom, with reasonable honesty, and send my contribution on to the federal bureaucrats, grumbling at every step of the way. We carry the self-inflicted mortification beyond any other nation. Why do we do it? Let's face it, because we accept Oliver Wendell Holmes' saying that taxes are the price of civilization; because, at heart, we trust our government to administer the money with a reasonable degree of competence and evenhandedness; and because, finally, we trust our neighbors—yes, we believe that they are doing their share too and, on average, will be as conscientious as we are, or maybe more so.

It is well to have the grizzly ordeal come in the Spring, the time of hope. Everything looks brighter then. We couldn't stand it in November. Taxes come up with the tulips.

Having made this unpopular genuflection to the income tax, let me add that I think that anything that weakens this unique relationship between Americans and their government is subversive in the ultimate sense. By the middle of this month 85 million individual income tax forms will have been received by the Treasury, with a vernal tide of about $186.8 billion dollars. Some 2.3 million corporations will have contributed another $60 billions. Of these returns about 2.5 percent will be audited. No doubt the fear of such audits propels the process along. But it would not survive for a minute without that additional ingredient: confidence in the ultimate fairness of the government and of fellow-citizens.

It is the ingredient of confidence that is challenged now from many directions. During the campaign candidate Carter called the tax system a "disgrace to the human race" which was a rhetorical way, I suppose, of promising that he would make reforms if elected; so far these reforms haven't appeared.

Confidence in the tax structure is attacked from many sides. For six years Representative Charles Vanik, Democrat of Ohio, has compiled an annual study of corporate tax loopholes. Last January he examined 168 of the biggest US companies and found that 17 of them had paid nothing in effective Federal income taxes in tax year 1976. These 17 companies (listed in the *Congressional Record* of January 26) had combined worldwide net incomes of $2.9 billion. No US income tax. Forty-one other giant companies (listed by name) paid less than 10 percent in effective federal income taxes in 1976, Vanik reported. IRS Commissioner Jerome Kurtz, in a TV appearance last week, agreed that corporations are paying a smaller proportion of all taxes than they used to; individuals are paying a higher proportion. Tax loopholes for corporations and affluent individuals, he acknowledged, have grown: Kurtz called it "an increasing number of abusive shelters." How much escapes? "We have some estimates of a $200 billion subterranean economy," Kurtz said. He put a comfortable face on it, however: "Two hundred billion dollars is a very high number, but in a two-trillion-dollar economy it's certainly not overwhelming," he said.

It may not be overwhelming in a world of cash and balance sheets, but in a tax system that rests on intangibles like faith and fairness, it could be said to be destructive.

Another attack on the unique American tax system is inflation. If we cherish the progressive income tax, we must do something about this. Consumer prices rose in February at an annual rate of 7.2 percent and the average worker's buying power, according to the Labor Department, declined at an annual rate of 2.4 percent. The consumer was caught between higher prices, a social security tax boost, and graduated income taxes. Consider the example of the luckless Jones family. The Jones family has four members, and back in 1955 Mr. Jones earned $15,000. His sympathetic employer matched inflation with wage increases, dollar for dollar, over 21 years. This produced a fine income of $32,900 in 1976—an increase of 120 percent. But the higher salary pushed the Jones family from a 22 percent tax bracket into a 36 percent bracket. Its tax soared from $1540 to $6600. That's an increase of 330 percent. The unfortunate family doubled its nominal income but it is now 11 percent worse off in purchasing power than in 1955.

Most American families, despite inflation, are better off than they were. But old people, pensioners, those on fixed incomes aren't; and now comes last week's warning signal that for one month, anyway, the average worker's buying power declined. If a Washington politician isn't aware of the dynamite in that signal he is very stupid indeed.

The most dangerous attack on the tax system in our time was made by Richard Nixon, who undertook to warp the Internal Revenue Service into a political appendage. On September 11, 1972, John Dean handed to IRS Commissioner Johnnie Walters an "enemies list" of 490 McGovern aides and supporters for investigation. Four days later, at the White House, H. R. Haldeman told Nixon that Dean was "moving ruthlessly" on the investigation "through IRS."

The attack on the integrity of the IRS, I think, was the worst breach of faith of Richard Nixon. As contrasted to this, John Kennedy, and, after him, Lyndon Johnson, called in the IRS regional commissioners and district directors and addressed them emphasizing their bipartisanship. On the third floor of the IRS building, down the hall, is a small plaque proudly commemorating the visit Kennedy made to the office—the only visit of any president. An income tax form tells about a citizen's family, debts, social status, payments, donations, contributions—it is hard to imagine any document more entitled to privacy. Information is recorded and stored on tapes in a bank of IRS computers in Martinsburg, West Virginia. David Wise, in his chilling book *The American Police State*, shows how Nixon and his crew deliberately set out to make the IRS the equivalent of the FBI and CIA, an instrument of social control. The Special Service Staff (SSS) had files on Jimmy Breslin, Mayor John Lindsay, Coretta King, columnist Joseph Alsop, the Ford Foundation, the American Civil Liberties Union. There were dozens of lists—"audit them, investigate them" were the orders. The sullen bureaucrats resisted. Nixon had three IRS commissioners in five years. And at the end of it all it was disclosed that Nixon himself paid only $792 in taxes in 1970, and $873 in 1971, having deducted half a million for donating his vice-presidential papers in an improperly backdated gift. Something to think about on April 15.

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Business and the rational mind, Part III

The national guilt complex • Achievement or original sin • Production vs. atonement

Judging by some of what we read and hear, self-flagellation seems about to become the order of the day. Much of whatever Americans do or achieve or enjoy is termed immoral or otherwise indefensible, and what people in other countries do is hailed as the shape of the future, morally speaking.

Well, now.

A lot of this national guilt complex depends on how things are put.

Suppose, for example, we ask you, "Do you think it's right for the United States, with only 5% of the world's population, to consume 28% of its energy?" That might be your cue to beat your breast and cry, "Heavens to Betsy, no! How could we do such a thing? And how can we atone?"

Suppose, however, we rephrase that question and ask you, "Isn't it remarkable that the United States, with only a twentieth of the world's population, can produce a fourth of the entire world's goods and services? And that we have become the industrial and agricultural breadbasket of the world . . . a prime purveyor to the hungry and the needy abroad?"

"Gee," you might say. "Just shows you what the old Yankee ingenuity, along with hard work and clean living, can do."

We can stomach breast-beating or a hair-shirt demonstration, if that's what gives the other fellow his kicks. But the point we want to make is that nobody in this country has to beat himself over the head just because he's adequately fed and clothed. Mankind has always striven for a land flowing with milk and honey, not a land short of necessities and barren of luxuries, long on deprivation and longer on austerity.

This is not a plea for devil-may-care hedonism. On the contrary, we are trying to make two points:

(1) Gratuitous martyrdom is an exercise in futility.

(2) When someone tries to make you feel guilty because our country has achieved to a considerable degree what all countries strive for, don't leap to the bait. Remember, it's possible to state even the most positive accomplishments in a way that makes them sound like original sin.

We get the distinct impression that most of the people who berate this country for its productivity are themselves quite well fed, well clothed, well housed, and, possibly as a result, feeling guilty. We cannot believe that Americans can solve, or even alleviate, the problems of this country and the rest of the world through starvation diets or by sleeping on a bed of nails. A refrigerator or a loaf of bread or a pair of shoes not bought and used in the United States is not automatically going to end up in some less-developed country.

The point is that our country is so productive, despite all the roadblocks thrown up by government and others, that it can turn out an almost unbelievable volume of goods—enough to supply the domestic market and still have a lot left over to export. If you want more U.S. money and food and other goods sent to needy peoples abroad, fine; tell your Senators and your Congressman so. But don't feel guilty about living well if you already do, or about wanting to if you don't.

We are not trying to promote gluttony or even conspicuous consumption. We are trying to deflate what strikes us as nonsense. Life is short, and people who work hard and productively shouldn't reproach themselves over their rewards, especially since producing for plenty makes society a lot more comfortable than sharing unnecessary shortage. To some people pleasure may be a little sinful, but if there were no sin in the world, what would be the benchmark for virtue?

Mark Twain once commented that on the basis of the information reaching him, his choice would be heaven for climate and hell for good conversation. Maybe he had something there.

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Correspondence

Massive retaliation

To the editors:

I was reading John Kenneth Galbraith's review of *Dulles* by Leonard Mosley in *The New Republic*'s issue of March 18 with great pleasure, savoring his customary wit, intelligence, and cogency until I came upon his statement that the book is "a mine of minor misinformation, and this leads, inevitably, to doubt as to some of his (Mosley's) larger and less checkable facts, conversations and conclusions."

A somewhat stronger emotion was aroused in me by his concluding sentence: "One weeps that some editor didn't take the time to read the book before unleashing it, to use a Dulles-era phrase, on the public."

As both the editor and publisher of the book I feel I can't ignore such a parting shot and am therefore, with the kind of permission of the author, violating a self-imposed rule of silence of some 16 years standing in responding to these alleged errors and strictures which do unjustified and, one hopes, unintentional harm to the reputation of a superb book and a distinguished author.

Alleged error 1) "Dean Rusk was never head of the Ford Foundation."

Mr. Galbraith is quite right—as is the final, printed version of *Dulles*. On page 470 Rusk is identified as head of the Rockefeller Foundation. I can only conclude that Mr. Galbraith made the fundamental error of writing his review on the basis of advance, *uncorrected* proofs. In view of his long experience at book-reviewing I find this surprising, particularly because every publisher issues a *caveat* when sending out advance proofs, entreating all reviewers to check the printed, final version of the book before making any quotations. (The error was in proof, was caught, and corrected in the published book on both pages 470 and 518, the latter being part of 30 pages of detailed source notes.)

Alleged error 2) "The Russians never dropped paratroopers dressed in civilian clothes on Berlin to take possession in the closing days of the war."

Mr. Galbraith is wrong. This is documented in the German Military Archives in Coblenz.

Alleged error 3) "Hitler, in his last weeks, was not at Zossen but at his bunker under the Reichschancellery garden. His earlier headquarters was not in Poland."

In the twilight months of 1945 Hitler was moved around considerably before going to earth in the famous bunker. One of his last "forward command headquarters" was at Rastenberg where Stauffenberg's bomb nearly killed him on July 20, 1944.

But what Mr. Mosley and I are at a loss to know is this: where in *Dulles* is a mention of Zossen or the Polish headquarters? We would be grateful if Mr. Galbraith would find the reference in the printed book and let us know.

Alleged error 4) "The Peenemünde raid came after the V-2 had been put in production at an underground factory, and the raid did not appreciably delay its use against England."

Contrary to Professor Galbraith's assertions, the facts are these: There were a *number* of raids on Peenemünde. The first took place on the night of August 17, 1943, conducted by Britain's Bomber Command. The first firing of the V-2 (witnessed by Albert Speer and others) was on June 13, 1942. It was a fiasco.

The second and successful test flight took place on October 14, 1942. Albert Speer, in *Inside the Third Reich*, records: "the final technical data was to be available by 1943, at which point we could go right into production." He goes on to point out that in the autumn of 1943 they were still unable to go into production. General Arnold (in *Global Mission*) says the V-2 did not get into production until January 1944.

In early September of 1944 some 25 V-2's were fired at England over a 10-day period, hardly the crushing blow Hitler was looking for.

In point of fact the British raid (according to von Braun and others who lived to describe its consequences) killed scientists and technicians and badly damaged workshops, labs, and houses. Perhaps the British should have hit harder. The American Air Force in 1944 attacked Peenemünde *three* times.

The large underground factory (actually there were several) for assembly of the V-2's was *not* at Peenemünde; one of the largest was at Nordhausen and there were several others at other locations. The initial British attack encouraged the Germans to *disperse* V-weapon activity from Peenemünde.

Alleged error 5) "Noel Field, after leaving Annemasse, is said here to drive through 'the placid Swiss countryside' from Cologne into Geneva, which is a lot like travelling across the placid New York countryside to the Bronx."

Having given us this peculiar geography lession Mr. Galbraith leaves both author and publisher bewildered as to just what passage in the book is at issue as "misleading." If Mr. Galbraith would care to take a look at what the printed book *says* on page 130 he will find:

> *They did not stop at the French frontier post at Collonges to find out* [if the Gestapo were following them], *but raced on through to the Swiss station 50 meters further on. Once the officials had checked them through, they drove quietly through the placid Swiss countryside into Geneva.*

Alleged error 6) "Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador to Washington, here offers a special visa to Eleanor Dulles nearly five years after his death."

For once Mr. Galbraith is right: Lord Lothian died on December 12, 1940 and was in turn replaced in 1946 by Lord Inverchapel. It was Eleanor Dulles herself who told Leonard Mosley of this offer. (We should have caught her error of memory.) I might remark at this point that all quotes from Eleanor Dulles (and many others, such as Averell Harriman, Paul Nitze, Admiral Arleigh Burke, Richard Bissell Jr., etc.) were presented to her in manuscript so she could review them, correct them if necessary and finally initial them to show that the quotes had been read, checked, and approved. (Harriman asked that some of his comments about Ike, for example, be removed and the author did so.)

I think one ought to stop here. Looking back at the body of the review one finds Mr. Galbraith, who was US Ambassador to India from 1961 to 1963, somewhat confusing about the chronology of his tenure and that of Allen Dulles.

Mr. Galbraith writes of how "all of us around at the time" were caused problems by Allen Dulles, in his own case by "overflights across India from Bengal to supply some tribesmen who were supposed to be opening up a kind of

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miniature second front against Peking. So Allen Dulles was sacked."

History records (and Leonard Mosley sets forth in detail in *Dulles*) that Allen Dulles had already effectively been sacked as a result of his role in the Bay of Pigs in April of 1961. Although he was kept on until November, he was bureaucratically dead from the moment of the failure. John F. Kennedy announced on September 28, 1961 that he was nominating John A. McCone to replace Dulles.

Ambassador Galbraith might give us a better idea of the CIA mentality of the time if he recalls some of the projects proposed and pressures brought to bear on him by the then CIA Station Chief in India in the years 1961 and 1962. That particular gentleman is still very much alive and, as Mr. Galbraith may be well aware, has *also* written a book on American intelligence.

Surely Mr. Galbraith knows more about the history of American intelligence in our time than he learned from working on the Strategic Bombing Survey and than he displays in his review.

James O'Shea Wade
Publisher
The Dial Press/James Wade Books

In reply:

Mr. Wade should have continued and extended his wise practice of the past 16 years. His protest fails on seven and a half counts out of a total of five.

Let me note at the outset that I review what publishers send me, in this instance bound proof, as I expect to be reviewed. So numerous, however, were Mr. Mosley's slips that I asked the editors of *The New Republic*, out of compassion, to get the book and see if some mistakes hadn't been corrected. One partial correction did escape their notice: on page 470, Dean Rusk is returned to the Rockefeller Foundation, altough on page 518, he is still telling how the CIA opened the *Ford* Foundation mail. On all other counts Mr. Wade and Mr. Mosley fail.

Thus, had the Soviets seized Berlin by air with troops in civilian clothes to forestall revolt and the Western Allies, it would have been one of the most spectacular operations of the war, the most discussed event of this much described battle. Considering the size of Berlin, it would have been also on an enormous scale. In fact, the Soviets shelled and fought their way into the center of the city on the ground. The end came on May 2 when the Berlin commander, General Helmuth Weidling, crossed the lines on the ground and surrendered to Marshal Vasili Chuikov. The Western Allies were not very close. Had the history been different, it would not have awaited any discovery from the Archives. It would have been known long ago, including to those who, in ensuing weeks, were there.

Hitler, at the time mentioned by Mr. Mosley (in the last days when Allen Dulles was negotiating for the Italian surrender), was not moving around; he was in the bunker beneath the Chancellery garden.

The reference to a Polish headquarters that neither author nor publisher can locate in the finished book is right there on page 139 of the volume I just bought. And the reference to Zossen that similarly they said they would thank me for finding is on page 230. I accept their thanks.

The V-2 was not manufactured at Peenemünde as the book asserts. It was in production elsewhere when the installation was attacked. "The attacks on the V-weapon experimental station at Peenemünde, however, were not effective; V-1 was already in production near Kassel and V-2 had also been moved to an underground plant." (*The United States Strategic Bombing Survey [European War] Summary Report*, 1945, page 12.) I helped direct the teams that made this investigation; that production was not substantially delayed was initially affirmed by Albert Speer in interrogations in which I participated. The rest of Mr. Wade's explanation on this matter is merely confusing.

Collonges, correctly spelled in my copy as in Mosley's book but changed by a printer to Cologne, is a close-in suburb of Geneva. No placid Swiss countryside lies between. Thus there was none to drive through.

I was right about the death of Lord Lothian as Mr. Wade concedes and also in saying that Mr. Mosely has Stalingrad falling and Eleanor Dulles acquiring the lasting affection of the Austrians for a mere million dollars, which he gives as the Marshall Plan aid to that country. Thus the score in my favor that I mentioned at the outset. That is because Mr. Wade doesn't mention these last two errors; after Lothian, he says wisely

(continued on page 38)

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Cover: Whittaker Chambers testifies before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Alger Hiss is the man staring at the camera in the upper left (with a white pocket handkerchief). T. S. Matthews reviews Allen Weinstein's Perjury *on page 27. Photograph courtesy of United Press International Photo.*

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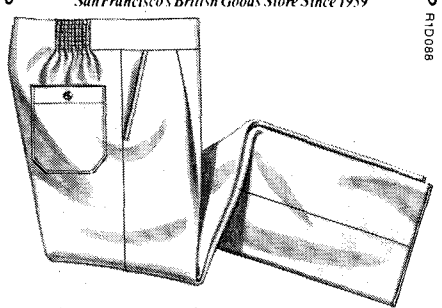

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Contents

TRB from Washington	2	**Tax Time**
	4	**Correspondence**
Comment	7	**King's Legacy** **Unwelcome Visitors** **Succor for the Cities** **Carter and Begin**
John Osborne	12	**White House Watch: Tough Talk**
Colin Legum	13	**Next: Eritrea**
Zygmunt J. B. Plater	15	**Fish In a Porkbarrel**
Morton Kondracke	16	**What the Navy Needs**
Michael Walzer	17	**Israel in Lebanon**
Henry Fairlie	18	**Galluping Toward Dead Center**
		Arts and Lives
Stanley Kauffmann	24	**Theater**
John Canaday	25	**Art**
		Books Considered
T. S. Matthews	27	**Perjury by Allen Weinstein**
Joyce Carol Oates	29	**Figures of Thought by Howard Nemerov**
Joseph McElroy	31	**Encores for a Dilettante by Ursule Molinaro**
Grace Marmor Spruch	32	**Scientists Under Hitler by Alan D. Beyerchen**
Robert Hassenger	34	**The Perpetual Dream by Gerald Grant and David Riesman**
James Walt	36	**Reconsideration: Belchamber by Howard Sturgis**
	38	**Brief Reviews**
Washington Diarist	42	**What's Left?**

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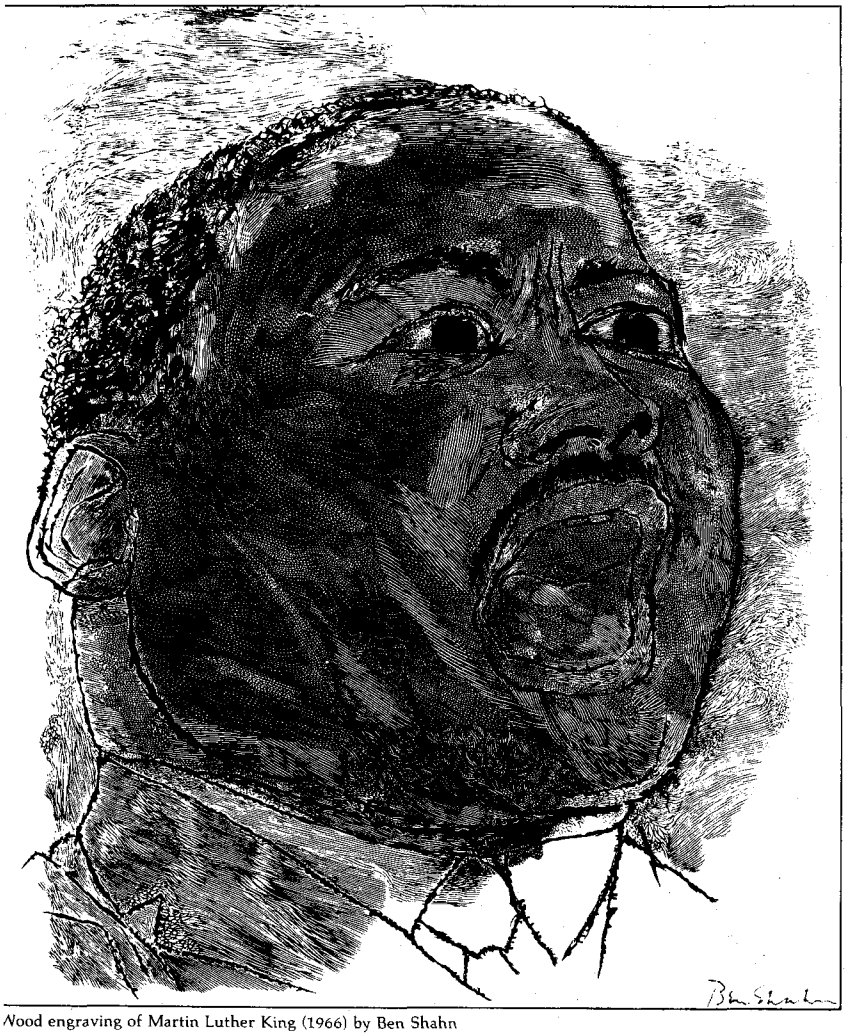
THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 8, 1978

King's Legacy

In his marvelous oral history of the civil rights movement, *My Soul is Rested*, Howell Raines introduces Hartman Turnbow, a poor black Mississippi farmer whose house still bears the marks of bullets fired by nightriders. Reflecting on the days then and since, Turnbow says, "For a poor person, it's just now gittin' right."

Just now it is 10 years since the country and the movement were rocked by the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. In the modern history of America, no other leader has so galvanized the energies and devotion of his followers, so defined their purpose and embodied their hopes. The anniversary of King's death is also an occasion to reflect on the progress of the civil rights movement he inspired and led. It is a measure of his leadership that the movement weathered the violence that emerged at the time of his death and stayed on the course he and his closest disciples set for it.



Wood engraving of Martin Luther King (1966) by Ben Shahn

The civil rights movement already has gone through two distinct periods, moving from the protest to the political phase, and now stands on the threshold of a third, a struggle for black economic justice. It's this last part of the struggle that Hartman Turnbow is talking about when he says that things are just now beginning to get right.

Protest movements usually rise and flourish on the energy of the moment, then recede and just go away, without much enduring impact on institutions. From the more recent anti-war movement, for example, there exists no continuing resistance to the military establishment. By contrast, the civil rights movement produced important legislative accomplishments—the civil

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rights and voting rights acts—which permanently altered the political landscape of America. As a result, most of today's black leadership comes from electoral politics, not from the protest movement.

Politics is the area of American life in which blacks have registered their greatest successes. There are nearly four times as many black electoral office holders today as in 1968, and the numbers creep steadily upward with each election. In the past two years, the number of elected blacks increased from 3979 to 4311, and nearly half that total hold office in the 11 states of the old Confederacy. It is encouraging that in cities where protest marches and violence marked the racial scene a decade ago—places like Newark, Detroit, Los Angeles, Atlanta—black mayors now run city hall. Mayors like Kenneth Gibson, Coleman Young, Tom Bradley, Maynard Jackson and Richard Hatcher have demonstrated their abilities not only to be elected from racially mixed constituencies, but to govern effectively, build bridges across racial lines and then to be reelected.

But blacks in elective politics must face a sad political reality, which is that many of the most talented and successful of them already have risen as far as they can rise in the present state of white enlightenment. In the entire country, there are only 16 blacks elected to statewide office. None besides Senator Ed Brooke of Massachusetts has risen higher than lieutenant governor. Until white voters begin to demonstrate a greater willingness to vote for black candidates, the horizons of some very talented public officials must remain severely limited. Take Maynard Jackson, for example, mayor of a majority black city, who has established an effective governing coalition with the powerful white business community in Atlanta. Or Richard Hatcher of Gary, one of the most creative managers of urban government to be found in any city anywhere. Both are enormously able administrators and politicians. Both harbor ambitions for public service at a higher level. But neither can realistically hope to win a statewide election in the foreseeable future. Another example is Julian Bond, a civil rights activist 10 years ago and now a Georgia state senator. Once Bond was put up for the Democratic party's vice-presidential nomination, but today he finds himself isolated, frustrated and on the verge of leaving electoral politics altogether. Bond says, "The average black mayor or lieutenant governor or state senator today has already reached the highest level to which he or she can realistically aspire."

Coming Next Week:

New American Hustler, Part Four: The Drug Abuse Hustle

In the past few years, the civil rights coalition has been strained. White liberals were distracted by the Vietnam war, and many have become more interested in other issues such as the environment. The labor movement has fallen out with black organizations over the matter of what one side sees as affirmative action and the other as reverse discrimination. Even more recently, black leaders delivered their support and the votes of their constituencies to a president who claimed he shared their aspirations for social and economic justice, then found themselves shortchanged in return, as Vernon Jordan of the National Urban League put it, "on policies, on programs and on people."

Jordan's criticism nine months ago opened the floodgates. Ever since, black leaders and organizations have concentrated on holding President Jimmy Carter to the commitments they believe he made when he campaigned for black votes in 1976. The Reverend Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH in Chicago accused the President of "callous neglect" in his failure to promote full employment, rebuild the cities, restore the welfare system and redistribute the tax burden. The Urban League weighed in once again with a dissent to the administration's tax cut plan, arguing that tax cuts should be narrowly focussed, taking the form of benefits to businesses that invest in urban areas with high unemployment and train the unemployed. The Congressional Black Caucus criticized Carter's jobs program and black mayors objected to early reports on the urban program, always on grounds of insufficient attention to black economic needs. Then, in the sharpest break with the administration, the NAACP denounced the Carter energy program, particularly those aspects based on higher taxes and conservation. Their logic was grounded entirely in self interest. Blacks are not heavy energy consumers. On the other hand, growth depends on dependable energy and jobs upon growth. The White House, it is said, was thunderstruck.

This extended black verbal attack on Carter was not coordinated, and the message was not entirely consistent. On the one hand, most black economists and political leaders remain wedded to the premise that government intervention is the best way to achieve economic justice. Government incentives can work, they say: with the mortgage interest deduction, the government built the suburbs. But the corollary to that premise, that the private sector can contribute only in a secondary fashion to the aspirations of blacks and other poor people, is no longer widely accepted. Thus, in its search for new allies on the political and economic front, the NAACP lined up with the oil industry and against the government.

Black leaders believe their attempt to flex their political muscle has worked, at least temporarily. One legislative strategist summed it up this way: "We finally hit them enough times to get their attention. Before Vernon Jordan, Jesse Jackson, Ben Hooks and Dick

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Hatcher began speaking out, all the rhetoric out of the White House was 'business confidence' and 'balanced budgets.' Now we've got an urban program we can live with, a Humphrey-Hawkins bill that zeros in on joblessness among minority youth, a commitment against Moynihan's idea to subsidize middle class private education, and a respectable position on the Bakke case."

These skirmishes represent the opening round of phase three of the civil rights movement: the economic offensive. If the strategy is a little diffuse, at least the objectives are in sight. Looking at the road ahead, Marion Wright Edelman, a civil rights leader of the 1950s, the 1960s and now the 1970s said, "Does it take courage? Yes, one of patience and persistence. In the 1960s you needed a physical courage. You didn't know when it was all going to end. But now it takes grip, the courage of the folk in Mississippi, who keep on when everybody else falls by the wayside."

In the final phase, the courage needed is a courage born of optimism and the movement's record of endurance. As Hartman Turnbow put it, "It's workin' now. It won't never go back where it was." Dr. King saw to that more than a decade ago.

Unwelcome Visitors

He is scarcely Cardinal Mindszenty, this latest refugee hiding in an American embassy. He is Arthur Chariton, former business partner of Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza and, more recently, resident of the Managua city jail. Two weeks ago, Chariton was out of prison on hospital leave and found himself unguarded. He walked away and made it to the US embassy, which gave him temporary refuge because he is a US citizen. At last word, Chariton's lawyers were negotiating with President Somoza to get permission for Chariton to leave the country. Somoza wants $200,000 that he seems to think Chariton cheated him out of. Chariton is offering $25,000. Chariton wants the embassy to act as his bargaining agent, but the State Department wants no part of that.

Chariton is only the latest unwelcome visitor to the US embassy in Managua during the current transition from US coziness with the Somoza regime to the strict neutrality in Nicaraguan affairs that the Carter administration is trying to establish. In mid-January, the embassy became the refuge for five Cuban-American employees of Somoza's blood plasma exporting company. They said they were afraid of what might happen to them following the killing of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, the fiery anti-Somoza editor. Another American official of the plasma firm has been accused of paying off Chamorro's murderers, and the US embassy offered to make the five available for questioning. But the Somoza government showed no interest and all returned to the United States.

Amid the rioting, work stoppages and political unrest that have followed Chamorro's murder, other visitors to the embassy have been asking the United States to help bring down the Somoza dynasty that the US propped up for four decades. The Carter administration has refused to release congressionally-approved military supplies to Somoza and clearly has withdrawn support from his government, much to Somoza's displeasure. But the oppositionists want more. They want active help in toppling Somoza and they are mad that the Carter administration won't give it. They also are angry that the US keeps advocating negotiation between Somoza and his enemies and peaceful transition to democratic rule. They don't like the fact that the Carter administration praised Somoza for dropping some of his more brutal tactics in suppressing the opposition and his exercise of reasonable restraint during the recent turmoil.

For more than 40 years, the American embassy served as a gathering place for co-conspirators in the repression and exploitation of Nicaragua. Now the clientele is changing. Americans who thought they could make money from the Somoza empire use the embassy as an escape hideout. Anti-Somoza plotters want help in staging a coup. But the Carter administration has the right idea. We are not interested in sponsoring governments in Nicaragua anymore or in fostering dependency. So, the embassy is listening to those who come, but is not doing their work for them.

Succor for the Cities

It is an eight-billion-dollar plan and it was presented in billion-dollar words. "The federal government has never before developed a comprehensive urban policy," the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced in a paper released on March 27, the day that President Carter's urban policy was unveiled. "No previous administration has set forth clear principles and policies to guide federal behavior toward cities." And then HUD proposed to fill the vacuum with a list of principles, seven in all. They are the kind of stuff that is deeply intoxicating to the planner-crats but otherwise quite bland. Consider principle number two: "National urban policy must reflect a comprehensive set of federal commitments and a carefully articulated set of priorities." Or number five: "National urban policy must reflect the need to strengthen substate,

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regional and metropolitan institutions."

The new urban policy carries a heavy freight of theory, heavier than the actual tonnage of fresh cash. This was disappointing to some advocates of federal intervention to save the cities. The National Urban League, for example, called for a "Marshall Plan for the cities" amounting to $11 billion—not the mixed bag of loan guarantees, tax breaks and subsidies, amounting to $8.3 billion that Carter has proposed. Nevertheless, Carter's plan would make significant changes in the way the government as a bureaucratic brain thinks about the cities, and this is excellent news.

If one considers the immensity of the task they have undertaken, one begins to understand why city planners speak in such cloudy terms. For what they hope to accomplish is nothing less than the reversal of a great demographic shift that's taken place in the last 10 years. Many old cities are in trouble, the administration's experts believe, because the wealthiest and ablest denizens have been running away to settle in the suburbs or in younger cities. According to a HUD survey taken in 1977, only 10 percent of the pollees said they thought that big cities were the best place to live. Eleven years earlier, George Gallup found that 22 percent of his pollees wanted to live in the city. The urge to leave is strong, and some of the government's programs have worked to encourage the emigration. As people left town, the tax burden on those who stayed grew heavier, increasing the pressure to leave. Now in the second year of the rule of Jimmy Carter, all this will be stopped. It sounds a bit like King Canute's command to the sea. One imagines Secretary of HUD, Patricia Harris, seating herself on a throne blocking the out-bound freeway ordering people back to town in the name of the seven principles of urban policy.

Of course there is more to the plan than that. The proposed federal actions are of three kinds, as described in a briefing by Harris and White House domestic policy coordinator Stuart Eizenstat. The first sort are those actions the federal government can take on its own initiative to improve cities' welfare, including the dispersal of grants and contracts and the revision of administrative policy. Second are indirect manipulations of the economy by which the government hopes to entice businessmen to linger on in cities they might otherwise quit. And third are some lesser enticements by which the government hopes to persuade the states to be more generous to cities within their borders.

The two largest direct aid programs in this package involve welfare and something called "counter-cyclical relief," the latter a special federal bailout program for cities and states begun during the recession of 1974 to prevent massive public employee layoffs. Under the welfare change, the federal aid Carter promised to give local welfare agencies beginning in 1981 will begin somewhat earlier, in fiscal 1979. And the counter-cyclical money, a third of which now goes to states, will be "re-targeted." Henceforth, all of it (about one billion dollars a year) will be given to cities, and only to cities that meet the administration's criteria for being "distressed." Eizenstat said that most of the new programs will be targeted on distressed areas, a policy that inspired reporters to ask for a definition of distress. Eizenstat could only give the general answer that the definition would cover places with a high level of unemployment (six percent or more), declining population and less than average income. Since billions of dollars hang on these terms, the seekers of aid can be counted upon to help the government refine the definition—a process that may continue for months and demand the attention of many legal minds.

The government will launch two new employment programs in the cities. One, costing one billion dollars a year for the next three years, will pay for "soft public works," which Eizenstat described as the rebuilding of city streets, bridges and public buildings. The other program will cost $1.5 billion a year and will provide tax credits to employers who agree to hire and train young workers referred to them by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Administration. Each employer will get a credit of $2000 the first year per CETA employee and $1500 the second year. There are about a dozen smaller programs designed to improve city housing projects, health and social services, parks, schools, transportation systems and arts programs.

Eizenstat, Harris and Robert Embry, the Assistant Secretary of HUD for community planning and development, said the most important change would not appear on the budget. They referred to a new administrative policy, now accepted by the President, that will require an "urban impact analysis" of every piece of legislation that crosses the President's desk from this day forward. Programs that are found to "hurt" cities will be sent back for revision. A preliminary review of the 1979 budget turned up 160 necessary changes in 38 programs already in existence. The shift in policy means that federal highway, anti-pollution and sewer building funds will be spent first on the inner city, and not on the suburbs. Needless to say, the suburbs are stirring.

To give businesses a reason to stay in the city, the administration will create a National Development Bank with the goal of financing commercial ventures in places where private banks fear to tread. The NDB will have the authority to give start-up grants, guarantee loans, subsidize industrial revenue bonds and create a secondary market in private loans in order to take some of the risk out of risky enterprises. In addition, Carter would like to give an extra investment tax credit of five percent (for a total of 15 percent) to any company that invests in a distressed area.

The states are to be lured into this campaign through an "incentive grant program" that will cost $200 million. States that agree to reorganize their own fiscal and administrative policies to favor cities—as the

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federal government will have done—will be rewarded for doing so. Eizenstat guesses that 15 or 20 states might become eligible for help in the first year. This program gives reluctant state officials a pragmatic reason for doing what they should be doing in any case. Mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana, for example, points out that while he is trying to keep the city's head above water financially, the state is sitting on a surplus of $500 million. If Carter's plan succeeds, Indiana will have less temptation than it does now to shirk its responsibility.

Carter and Begin

They are both stubborn men and inexperienced diplomats. Were it not for these shared characteristics, the bitter confrontation between the US and Israel might have been avoided. It is traditional in diplomacy to leave disagreements to subordinates. But President Carter, who foolishly undercut Yitzhak Rabin a year ago by taking a hard line with him right before the Israeli elections, then erred in the opposite way with Begin in August and December, was determined this time to do it right. So he brought the head of a friendly country to Washington intent on drubbing him. And Prime Minister Begin, who seems supremely confident of his own persuasive powers, against all evidence, could not miss a chance to defend his old positions. The result was a very bad meeting. The shock may prove beneficial in the long run, but there is a real danger that Carter and Begin will find themselves locked into untenable positions.

Begin chose to fight for the worst possible causes: the Sinai settlements (a new enthusiasm); the right of Jews to settle in the heartland of the West Bank (a recent poll showed that 70 percent of Israelis are prepared to yield that right for the sake of "secure and recognized boundaries"); his own implausible interpretation of Resolution 242 as not applying at all to the West Bank. These are not the issues on which Israel's security depends. The desire to settle in these controverted areas is an impulse of only several hundred Israeli zealots.

Begin's selection of these issues seems almost designed to make a compromise settlement with Egypt impossible. (Of course Egypt has the shame of its aloneness in the Arab world as another reason for not reaching an agreement with Israel too quickly.) And Begin's stand plays into the hands of those many Americans in high places who would like to cut America's moral and political ties with Israel for the sake of the Saudi connection. In Jerusalem in November, we had a glimpse of Begin as a statesman and national leader. In Washington in March, we saw only the party chief, an aging and rigid ideologist.

In fact, as soon as Begin got back to Israel, he found a restive body politic. Members of Begin's own right-wing coalition probably will force him to soften his stand on Resolution 242. It also is unlikely he will be able to sustain for very long his hard line on settlements in the Sinai and the West Bank.

But if Israel were to shift its positions on these three points, would this be enough to start the peace process moving again? That is not so clear. President Carter and his chief advisers have made it hard for any Arab leader to concede what Sadat almost certainly once would have conceded. What has emerged in Washington is something very close to total support for the maximalist positions of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. At the very least, the administration has given no public indication of what demands the Arabs might yield in exchange for a settlement. This is much more likely to encourage Arab extremists than to succor such Arab moderates as there are. The entire burden of movement has been placed on Israel, and the American role as mediator is (once again) in jeopardy. Begin's rigidity made it easy for Carter to take a hard and very partisan line; Carter's line in turn makes it easier for Begin to maintain his position against domestic opponents. Nor will American public opinion, for that matter, expect Begin to be very conciliatory about the West Bank if he only has Sadat—and not Hussein of Jordan—to talk to.

Any Israeli government will insist—and rightly—on security arrangements that would require movement on the Arab side too—significant political and territorial concessions, in fact. Carter knows this, or should. If he does not, Vance and even Brzezinski can tell him; they certainly should save him the embarrassment of finding out the hard way that no alternative Israeli government would or could buckle to his demands for a one-sided retreat. What Carter and his aides have done, quite undiplomatically, is to allow Begin to make them angry. Or, they have pretended to be angry in order to conceal their drift toward a policy dictated more by the

Enough is enough, Menachem. Get those settlements off Boardwalk.

Drawing by Mike Peters

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need for oil than by the need for peace. The US, *The New York Times* has written, "is dependent on the oil of Saudi Arabia and it is increasingly beholden to the oil-rich Arabs who are gathering American wealth." This is one reason why Israelis distrust the casual counsel of Americans that they "take a gamble" for peace. Everyone, it seems, is urging a gamble on them. But if the gamble is lost, only they will live or die with its consequences.

In these circumstances Begin's defiance might be stirring, if it did not cover such a narrow-minded position of his own. Carter's grim determination might be attractive, if it did not cover, as we suspect it does, oil hunger and political weakness. America can't get tough in the Middle East if the only country it can bully is Israel: that kind of toughness is neither morally attractive nor likely to be politically effective. This is not a time for tight-lipped anger. It is a time for diplomatic skill, flexibility and maneuver.

White House Watch

Tough Talk

Zbigniew Brzezinski was feeling his oats when the President's speech on defense policy at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, was being drafted and redrafted. He let a *Washington Post* interviewer hear him tell an assistant to put some "bite" in an early draft and assured the same interviewer that he himself was "toughening up" the speech. After the speech was delivered on March 17, he told a *New York Times* interviewer that he indeed had "toughened" it. One might wonder from these accounts and other evidence of Brzezinski's emergence from the White House shadows into public view as the President's vocal and assertive assistant for national security affairs how much Jimmy Carter has to do with his defense and foreign policy pronouncements. One might also wonder whether in the person of Brzezinski we are beginning to get another Henry Kissinger, a dominating adviser of whom people may soon be saying what Carter said of Gerald Ford and Kissinger in 1976: "As far as foreign policy goes, Mr. Kissinger has been the President of this country."

That is neither the prospect nor, the inquirer is told, Brzezinksi's intention. To start with, he's no Henry Kissinger and never will be. A small difference among many big differences, some of them to Brzezinski's credit, is that Kissinger in his roles as White House assistant and Secretary of State always talked down and never talked up his influence with his Presidents and his impact upon their policy statements. He never suffered from the obscurity which Brzezinski now tells journalists he endured in his first year in order to minimize any impression or appearance of conflict with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Brzezinski also and happily says he is busting out of obscurity with the President's consent, on the assumption that he won't be suspected from now on of trying to displace or out-do Vance.

The evolution of the defense speech suggests that Carter decided for himself that the time had come to be more forthright and explicit, "tougher"—to use Brzezinski's favorite term—in his expression of attitudes toward and relationships with the Soviet Union than he'd previously been. From the earliest outline stage, one is told, the speech in this respect was always intended to be what it turned out to be. Brzezinski presumably had something to do with bringing Carter to this view of current necessities. It's known that Carter left the initial planning of the speech entirely to Brzezinski and his NSC staff. The number-two Big Thinker on the staff, Harvard professor-on-leave Samuel P. Huntington, and Brzezinski's deputy, David Aaron, worked up the first outline. Carter sent the outline to Secretary of Defense Harold Brown for comment. (Vance isn't mentioned, but he and his people must have had a swipe at the drafts.) Brown returned the outline to Carter with extensive comments. The President's chief speech writer, James Fallows, prepared the first full draft from the NSC outline and Brown's comments. Carter sent that draft to Brown, and he and Brzezinski worked simultaneously with copies of it. Instead of appending comments, Brown wrote out a substitute draft. It later seemed to him and concerned assistants that the delivered speech was pleasingly close to his draft. Brown, for example, contributed the reference early in the delivered speech to "some myths": that the US under Carter is pulling back from its world-wide interests and friends; that "our defense budget is too burdensome," that most of the budget goes for strategic missiles and nuclear weapons—only 10 percent does, the President said; and that with a nuclear arsenal the country doesn't need large conventional military forces—we and our allies do need them, the President said.

The whole was what it was intended to be, a tough statement of the country's defense posture, needs and purposes, and it was replete with Brzezinski "bite" and ideas. "The world has been changing and our responses must change with it" was pure Brzezinski, a statement of the obvious which he makes or inspires so often that it sometimes seems to be all he has to say. In sterner passages Carter spoke of "an ominous inclination on the part of the Soviet Union to use its military power to intervene in local conflicts with advisors, with equipment, and with full logistical support and encouragement for mercenaries from other Communist coun-

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tries, as we can observe today in Africa" and, in Europe, of "excessive" Soviet and satellite military buildups "beyond a level necessary for defense." The European buildup must be countered, he said, by "significantly increasing US forces" stationed in western Europe or ready for rapid deployment there. His references to Soviet intervention and to Communist "mercenaries" seemed to dispose for good and all of the notion, formerly but no longer put about by UN Ambassador Andrew Young, that the Cuban and Soviet presence in Africa, first in Angola and lately in Ethiopia, is nothing to worry about. Carter's assertions of US global responsibilities and of his determination to meet those responsibilities by armed force if necessary were as sweeping as any ever heard from John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon.

At home and in Moscow, the President's discussion of nuclear and strategic armaments and restraints drew more attention than any other parts of the speech. "In its balanced strategic nuclear capability," Carter said, "the United States retains important advantages, but over the past decade the steady Soviet buildup has achieved functional equivalence in strategic forces with the United States." Reporters flying to Winston-Salem with Carter, Brzezinski and Brown among others aboard the President's plane were told by "an American official" that "functional equivalence" meant simply that the Soviet Union could do anything with its nuclear strategic forces and weapons that the US could do with its. Carter's most interesting reference was to the US-Soviet strategic arms limitation talks, which have been stumbling toward a second-stage agreement (SALT II) ever since Carter over-loaded them early last year with a proposal for impossibly drastic strategic arms reductions. In an effort to reassure senators and other doubters who believe the US negotiators have already conceded far too much to the Soviets, the President said: "We are not looking for a one-sided advantage, but before I sign a SALT agreement on behalf of the United States, I will make sure that it preserves the strategic balance, that we can independently verify Soviet compliance, and that we will be at least as strong relative to the Soviet Union as we would be without an agreement."

This obvious attempt to lessen Senate opposition both to any conceivable SALT treaty acceptable to the Soviet Union and, more immediately, to the second and pending Panama Canal treaty, justifies a question whether the defense speech really represents the "shift in emphasis in American foreign policy" that an angry Moscow response said it did. The gaps between Carter's fiscal 1979-80 defense budget projections and the scope of responsibility defined at Winston-Salem raise the same question. The record testifies that the speech represents yet another shift in the Carter rhetoric of foreign and defense policy and little if anything more.

Recall candidate Carter in Dallas, April 1976: "I believe in a strong defense. The number one priority of any President has got to be the security of our country." Or Carter accepting the Democratic nomination and saying in the same speech: "It is time for America to move and to speak not with boasting and belligerence but with a quiet strength" and "the foremost responsibility of any President, above all else, is to guarantee the security of our nation—a guarantee of freedom from the threat of successful attack or blackmail, and the ability with our allies to maintain peace." Or recall President Carter at Notre Dame on May 22, 1977, in the speech that until he spoke at Winston-Salem stood as his definitive foreign policy statement. Brzezinski took large credit for the speech, incidentally. It was then that Carter said: "Being confident of our own future, we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear." He also said, "The unifying threat of conflict with the Soviet Union has become less intensive," and—in ultimate Brzezinski language—"It is a new world that calls for a new American foreign policy—a policy based on constant decency in its values and on optimism in our historical vision." And finally, three sentences from the end: "Our policy is reinforced by our material wealth and by our military power."

Nothing wrong with any of it, of course. Until you start asking , what is *it?*

John Osborne

The worst is yet to come
in the Horn of Africa.

Next: Eritrea

Who told the State Department that "the war is over" in Ethiopia? This claim by its spokesman a few days ago is a wild misreading of what is happening in the Horn of Africa. So far from being over, the war is about to assume what is likely to prove to be the bloodiest chapter in the already sanguinary four years of fighting since the present military regime, the Dergue, took power in Addis Ababa.

Neither the Russians nor the Cubans show any signs of reducing their military involvement in Ethiopia. They have ignored President Carter's appeal to them after his success in mediating the withdrawal of the Somali Republic's regular forces from the Ogaden in exchange for a promise that the Ethiopian army would not cross the Somali border.

But there is an intriguing difference in policy between the Cubans and the Russians concerning their military role in the next phase of the fighting. The

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crucial question now is whether Fidel Castro will be as cynically willing as President Brezhnev has been to turn his guns against the former Russian-Cuban protégés, the Eritreans.

The Ogaden war zone was only one of four areas of armed conflict in Ethiopia. It came to assume special importance because it was the first front where the Russians and Cubans became directly involved. The Communists entered the fray in support of Ethiopia's avowed aim of stopping Somalia's aggression. The United States came under heavy pressure from Somalia's allies, who also happen to be friends of the US—Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Egypt and Iran—to respond by giving military support to the Somalis. Washington, unwilling to become militarily involved in the Horn of Africa, but concerned about not letting down its friends, pressured the Somalis into ending the Ogaden conflict. As a predictable but apparently overlooked result, the Ethiopian army and its foreign backers are able to turn their attention to other battles.

Of course the fighting may not end in the Ogaden when the Somali regulars have withdrawn from the area. The local Somalis, led by the indigenous West Somali Liberation Front, have announced their intention of keeping up their guerrilla struggle. But the immediate attention of the Ethiopians and their allies will shift to the second most important war zone: Eritrea. Three Eritrean liberation movements have been fighting a 16-year guerrilla struggle to achieve autonomy for their territory, which was transferred back to Ethiopia from Italian occupation in 1952.

The Eritrean liberation movement has been one of the most tenacious and dedicated self-determination struggles ever fought in the third world. It has the overwhelming popular support of Eritrea's four million Muslim and Christian inhabitants. The rebels already control over 95 percent of the territory. They govern it with remarkable efficiency, integrity and tolerance. What has prevented them from achieving complete success has been conflict among the three liberation movements—a phenomenon of all liberation struggles. But the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) has emerged as the dominant element, and there is an agreement in principle among the rivals to form a national front.

For most of the time since its inception in 1961, the Eritrean rebellion has had active support from the Arab world, including Libya, as well as from the Soviet bloc and Cuba. But in 1974, when the Soviets switched sides in the Ogaden struggle and embraced the Dergue, they opportunistically abandoned the Eritrean liberation movement. First Moscow insisted that Eritrea should find its future in a federal arrangement with Ethiopia—a solution the Eritreans reject. Then a few weeks ago, *Pravda* announced a new line: that the Eritrean liberation movements "viewed objectively are helping the realization of imperialist designs." The Russians have been flying large amounts of arms and 'specialists' into Eritrea, on behalf of the Dergue. Their build-up has increased considerably since the announcement of the Somali withdrawal from the Ogaden. So the Russians are actively priming the war that is about to be escalated in Eritrea.

But what of the Cubans? Cuba's Vice President, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, told Hugh O'Shaughnessy in an interview published in the London *Observer* in February: "We helped the Eritreans in their fight for self-determination from the time of Haile Selassie onward. We feel that there has to be some political solution to the Eritrean problem, and that there have to be talks between the Eritreans and the Central Government. But Eritrea is an internal problem of the Ethiopian revolution." If these words mean anything at all, they mean that the Cuban leadership is against imposing a military solution on the Eritreans and, by implication, unwilling to be used in Ethiopia's attempt to coerce the Eritreans through military power based largely on Russian and Cuban aid.

Now that the Russians have decided to betray the Eritreans, will the Cubans fall in line? Will they refuse to allow their 13,000-strong military force (of whom fewer than 2000 are non-combatants) to fight in Eritrea?

There already are reports that the Cubans have begun to arrive in Asmara, the besieged Eritrean capital. Because of the source of these reports—Addis Ababa—these reports should be treated with caution. Meanwhile, there is silence from Havana.

The war in Eritrea is going to be horrible since the Eritreans are strongly entrenched and deeply committed. They can only be overwhelmed by the total weight of Russia's modern weapons, supplied to the Ethiopians but "supervised" by Russian military specialists. The Ogaden campaign was directed by a Russian general. The conquest of Eritrea is important to both the Ethiopians and the Russians. The territory includes the corridor linking highland Ethiopia to its only two ports on the Red Sea, Massawa and Assab. This corridor is in the hands of the Eritrean guerrillas. The capital, Asmara, has been completely encircled for more than a year. Massawa has been besieged from the land-side since last October. The road to Assab is impassable. Therefore, it is a vital Ethiopian interest to crush the Eritreans. The Russian objective is equally vital: a naval base on the Red Sea to substitute for the facilities their navy lost in the Somali port of Berbera.

Meanwhile, there are two other war fronts where the Ethiopians have lost the initiative. To the south of

Next Week: Ken Bode starts on the 1978 primary trail.

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the Ogaden lies the land of the Oromos (Gallas) in Bale and Sidamo. Perhaps 80 percent of this territory is under the control of Oromo guerrillas. And in the north—in Tigre, Begemder, Gojjam, Wollega and Ilubabor—armed opponents of the Dergue are in full revolt.

What role will the Russians and Cubans play in these other battles? The rather naive Washington view has been that if only the Somali regulars could be gotten to withdraw from the Ogaden, the reason (or pretext) for foreign military intervention would have been eliminated and the Russians and Cubans would begin to withdraw.

This view is not only naive but also ignorant. It overlooks the two reasons given by the Russians and Cubans for their initial decision to intervene militarily. One reason was to help an African country "resist aggression" by Somalia; the other was (in their own words), "an international responsibility to the progressive working-class movement to assist in consolidating the Ethiopian revolution." Since this revolution lacks popular support and is a very long way from being consolidated, there is still a large military role for the Cubans and Russians to play.

Colin Legum

Colin Legum is an associate editor of the *Observer* of London and editor of *Africa Contemporary Record* and *Middle East Contemporary Survey.*

The snail darter knows wherein it swims.

Fish In a Porkbarrel

The little snail darter that stopped the Tellico Dam, one of last year's more whimsical news stories, turns out to have known wherein it swam. The three-inch-long endangered species, newspapers reported last year, had halted a "$100 million hydroelectric dam" at the "eleventh hour" in a "classic confrontation between energy needs and the environment." The Endangered Species Act itself was soon endangered because of the backlash against what was called "statutory extremism" in the Tellico case. The congressional hearings and investigations that followed the fish's victory in the courts, however, have told a different story.

Shortly after the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals enjoined the Tellico Dam for violating the Act, the General Accounting Office analyzed the TVA project. That study showed that deferring to the snail darter by *not* filling the reservoir can, even now, be more profitable to all concerned than closing the dam gates.

The dam, it turned out, was never intended to generate electricity. Rather, it was merely one component of a TVA regional economic development project that has dammed the river system in 68 successive lakes, 22 within 60 miles of Tellico. This last dam was planned only to create subsidized lakefront industrial sites and a final flatwater recreation lake, objectives which the General Accounting Office did not find particularly useful. The dam itself, which TVA rushed to near-completion after the discovery of the snail darter, is only a minor part of the project: $5 million worth of concrete and labor and $17 million of earthworks, out of the project's total cost of $120 million. Most of the project's budget was spent to buy the valley's fertile farmlands and to improve roads and bridges in the area, assets that are valuable without the reservoir.

The GAO report found that TVA's benefit claims for the Tellico project were completely unreliable. The value of added flatwater recreation facilities, for instance, was projected at $1.4 million annually, almost half of total project benefits. This was unrealistic, given the existence of 22 nearby reservoirs, and considering that the dam would eliminate the finest remaining trout fishing water in the southeast.

The interests of the snail darter, it turns out, coincide with those of other species around Tellico, including human beings. Local citizens have been fighting the dam for 16 years, through lawsuits, petitions and, in several cases, shotgun threats to avoid being driven from their land. The little fish requires cool, clean flowing big river water, with shallow cobbled shoals for spawning. It used to live throughout the eastern portion of the Tennessee river system, but after the construction of 68 reservoirs in the valley, its remaining population now survives in the region's last such stretch of clear flowing river. After TVA's dam-building boom, the surrounding river valley also is unique. It contains 25,000 acres of prime agricultural land, as rich as the Mississippi Delta. A dozen major Cherokee historic sites line the riverbank, including Tuskegee, the village where the great Chief Sequoyah was born; the Echota religious capital; and Tenassee, which gave its name to the river and the state. Colonial Fort Loudon is on the riverbank, and near there in 1975 archaeologists discovered two of the oldest sites of continuous human settlement in America, a record of 10,000 years of valley occupation. All these assets—the river, farmlands, and historic sites—would have been buried under about 20 feet of mud and water if the dam were closed.

Development of the river valley without a reservoir, thus saving the snail darter, appears to be a profitable alternative even today with the dam virtually complete. TVA is moving into land development ventures, now that it has run out of places to build dams, and the GAO study observed that the unflooded Tellico project is

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admirably suited for such development. In addition to river recreation and farming—which could yield twice as much yearly revenue as the entire reservoir project—the GAO noted the valley's tourist potential. Its historic sites along the river form a path connecting the adjoining Smoky Mountains National Park (with 10 million visitors a year) with the major north-south interstate highway, I-75. Carefully developing the valley instead of flooding it would relieve pressures on the park itself and add a valuable tourist route for the local economy. An extra two square miles of potential industrial lands also exist in the unflooded valley, adjoining major railroad lines and arterial highways.

So the snail darter may have saved a fertile river valley threatened by a marginal federal project. It also has shown us that the bloom is off the New Deal's sweetest smelling rose. No longer a model of state enterprise, the Tennessee Valley Authority has become a somewhat obstinate utility company—the largest in the nation—wielding extraordinary political power in its six-state region. Perhaps the Tellico snail darter case will remind it of its public-spirited origins.

Zygmunt J. B. Plater

Zygmunt J. B. Plater teaches law at Wayne State University.

Hyman Rickover not included.

What the Navy Needs

The Carter administration's sovietologists believe that Moscow has paused to take stock of US-Soviet relations, and so the White House decides to send some signals. The President boards the *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, America's latest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, and watches a spectacular display of naval might involving the explosion of $387,000 worth of missiles, shells and bombs. The same day, Carter delivers a major foreign policy speech in which he charges that the Soviet Union has been engaging in a "massive" military buildup which could be used "for political blackmail and could threaten our vital interests." The President declares: "We will match, together with our allies and friends, any threatening power through a combination of military forces, political efforts and economic programs. We will not allow any other nation to gain military superiority over us." The speech sounds tough, and Carter's aides go around taking credit for making it tougher. It appears as if the United States is changing courses, and the Russians seem to get the message.

And then what happens? In the President's first major military budget decision after the speech, he decides to chop by half the Navy's plans for warship construction over the next five years. What kind of message to the Soviets is this? How can they help but think that Carter's new toughness is only talk? As if to underscore the second message, Carter decided not to build any new nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. In effect, he was labelling the whole exercise aboard the *Eisenhower* as an expensive show, signifying nothing.

Despite its symbolism, there is merit behind the President's substantive decision, made on the recommendation of Defense Secretary Harold Brown, to spend $30 billion on new ships during the next five years instead of the $49 billion the Navy expected. The administration proposes to build 70 new warships and support vessels, to modernize 13 others and to increase the size of the fleet from its present 462 ships to 525 by the mid-1980s. Navy admirals contend that 600 ships are the minimum necessary to protect American interests worldwide.

The administration slashed the Navy's budget because it thinks the Navy cannot even manage its existing shipbuilding program, keep costs under control or devise a coherent sea strategy for the future. Much of the problem is bureaucratic. The US Navy really consists of several sub-navies—the air navy, the surface navy, the undersea navy, the nuclear and non-nuclear, the strategic-mission and the non-strategic. Instead of determining a naval strategy first, then figuring out how to mix, tailor and pare its components to conform, the Navy's top brass has let each component plan its own missions and make its own ship requests, and then tried to find a strategy that gives it all some coherence.

The system best designed to suit the Navy's bureaucratic needs is the nuclear aircraft carrier task force. Almost everybody gets something out of it. The air navy gets 100 planes. The nuclear navy gets a new $2.4 billion, 940,000-ton monument to its founder, Admiral Hyman Rickover. The surface navy gets the carrier's escort of cruisers and destroyers. The submarine navy gets some attack boats to guard the task force. The Navy now has 13 carriers, three of them nuclear with a fourth under construction. The Navy wanted yet another before the administration said no.

In order to justify building more aircraft carriers and their various ancillary equipment, the Navy claims its mission ought to be to attack the Soviet Union during wartime, either by launching carrier-based aircraft or actually landing troops on Soviet soil. It is a traditional enough aspiration, adapted straight out of World War II. But the Defense Department believes that warfare has changed dramatically since 1945, in ways that make this strategy obsolete—or at least prohibitively expensive. Long-range missiles and bombers, rather than surface ships, are the likely instruments for carrying the battle inside Russia. High-accuracy guided missiles, nuclear weapons, reconnaissance satellites and laser-

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guided bombs all make it likely that big carriers will be targets as much as threats in the next war. The prospect of planes that can take off and land vertically suggests that smaller platform ships, rather than supercarriers, are the trend of the future.

In its dramatic growth from a coastal defense force to a blue-water superpower, the Soviet navy has deployed just one carrier, a relatively small one used as a base for vertical-takeoff airplanes. Two or three other carriers are under construction, possibly including a nuclear one, but all will be much smaller than ours.

Obviously, there is important work for the Navy to do, even for carriers to do. They can respond to small, local crises. They can help keep the sea lanes open for military supplies and commerce. But the question facing the Carter administration was whether to build *more* big nuclear carriers and thereby endorse the Navy's current strategy, or to cut back on carriers and force the development of a new strategy. The administration decided on a smaller, non-nuclear carrier, at half the cost of a nuclear one.

Carter's decision will be fought furiously in Congress. Unfortunately, the legislators' passion will be aroused more by fears of lost jobs and offended friends in the Navy bureaucracy than by concern for the nation's security. For all his useful service to the country in the past, Admiral Rickover lately has become a special impediment to clear thinking about naval needs, both within the Navy and in Congress. His political following is so great that it is practically sacrilegious in Congress to question Rickover's judgment. He strikes terror in much of the Navy—"the Pentagon's answer to J. Edgar Hoover," one critic dubbed him—in a way that cuts short debate about non-nuclear options and even new nuclear technology. President Carter has shown he can say "no" to his old Navy mentor. In the interest of securing what is best for the service, it may be time for the President, at long last, to ask Rickover, who is 78, to retire.

Besides its strategic and bureaucratic tangles, the Navy suffers from administrative chaos in its shipbuilding program. This also involves Admiral Rickover. Ships almost always are finished late, and at costs that far exceed their contract prices. Shipping contractors have filed claims of $2.7 billion against the government to cover the costs, though Rickover blames the cost overruns on the builders' own inefficiency, mismanagement and fraud. They in turn blame Rickover, whose giant Trident nuclear submarine is a key example of delays and cost overruns, for constantly injecting himself into contracting matters that are none of his business. Regardless of who is specifically to blame for the shipbuilding mess, the administration has decided to hold back on new spending until it can be more sure that the money invested in these programs will not be wasted.

So President Carter had good reasons for his decision to hold down Navy spending. But the timing of the decision's announcement undercut the message that Carter was trying to send to Moscow. This was of a piece with other recent mistakes. Zbigniew Brzezinski said Soviet inroads in the Horn of Africa might damage prospects for a strategic arms accord but then under pressure from administration colleagues he withdrew. No sooner had President Carter finished making his tough speech at Wake Forest University than administration sources began telling columnists that Carter was anxious to conclude a SALT agreement soon. All together, it makes Carter look vacillating, and that is not good.

Morton Kondracke

Just and unjust responses to terrorism.

Israel in Lebanon

UN forces have started moving into Southern Lebanon. Israeli forces will be moving out. One can imagine a new regime in "Fatahland"—the terrorists expelled, Christian and Moslem Lebanese living in peace, the border quiet. The power of the Syrians north of the Litani river may be enhanced, and perhaps Israel intended that outcome too: a kind of cooperation between Syria and Israel, informal, unacknowledged, mediated by the UN, aimed at the control and repression of the PLO. All this would be to the good, and it would help to justify the Israeli invasion.

But the invasion has to be judged primarily as a reaction—not only to the murders on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway, but to a long series of terrorist raids, bombardments, and rocket attacks from Lebanese territory. I always have believed that Israel has a right to respond to attacks of this sort with counter-attacks. It certainly is not bound to adopt a purely defensive posture: terrorists are criminals who can be hunted. *But they have to be hunted.* The appropriate counterattack is on-the-ground and across-the-border. Bombing villages and refugee camps simply repeats the terrorism, killing and injuring the wrong people. If they are not to kill at random, soldiers have to get close enough to take aim.

So, in the circumstances, and amidst the shock and sadness of the most recent Fatah "success," I was relieved to hear that Israeli forces were moving in strength across the border, looking for PLO encampments, positions, fortresses. The initial Israeli government announcement said exactly the right things: there could be no reprisals for the murder of civilians; this was a military operation aimed only at the armed men and women of the PLO. But as it turned out, that announcement was only partially accurate. Reports in

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the American press make it clear that air power and artillery also were used in ways that turned civilians into targets, killing innocent people and driving thousands from their homes. One hundred thousand refugees, perhaps more: another "success" that no one should want to celebrate. In some areas, the Israelis fought well indeed: entering villages to seek out PLO fighters and accepting risks in order to do that, rather than bombarding villages from some great distance, like the Americans in Vietnam. But mostly they used their fire power, the reflex of a modern army, in what can only be called an indiscriminate fashion.

Fighting that way is neither necessary nor wise, and Israel was especially well prepared to fight differently. Its army is not only one of the best, but also one of the best disciplined in the world. Its intelligence services knew the exact location of every terrorist base. Its government had, one would think, the strongest possible reasons for distinguishing its own methods from those of its enemies. Still, the tactics Israel's army adopted were familiar and disheartening. And those tactics radically devalued what the army achieved.

It is an old trick, of course, to hold Israel to higher standards than anyone else. But the standards I am trying to defend here are ones to which Israel is publicly committed and which it has—more often than most states—honored in the past. The agonizing debate about the Lebanon operation now going on in Israel suggests that these standards remain the ethical norms for the society as a whole. These standards also are ones that many Americans defended when we opposed our own government in Vietnam. We must continue to defend them.

No doubt, it was part of the Zionist vision to build for the Jews a state like other states. But the Begin government seems to take that injunction too literally. This Zionist, along with many others, still hopes for something better.

Michael Walzer

Michael Walzer, TNR contributing editor, is the author of *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (Basic Books).

Public opinion polls are inherently conservative.

Galluping Toward Dead Center

by Henry Fairlie

I always had an interest in polls, and found them to be extremely important in politics, both ways, reading public opinion and having an impact in their own right.

Charles Colson

I have long believed that public opinion polls inevitably lead to conservative conclusions about the state of the popular mind, and therefore they inevitably have a conservative influence on what politicians do. If proof were needed, it is to be found in a new magazine, called simply *Public Opinion*, published by the American Enterprise Institute. The editors are Seymour Martin Lipset, one of the most influential thinkers among the neoconservatives, and Ben J. Wattenberg, chairman of the conservative-inclined Coalition for a Democratic Majority. Among the pollsters and political scientists whom one would expect to find on the editorial board of such a magazine are—you've guessed it—Irving Kristol, the entrepreneur and chief publicist of neo-conservatism, and Herbert Stein, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Nixon and President Ford. We may be satisfied with Stein's description of the AEI: "It is a think tank of predominantly conservative people, but who, by being conservative, may be the wave of the future rather than the past." He should know; he belongs to it.

But these are honorable men. The AEI likes to refer to its members as scholars, and scholars would not let their prejudices influence their reading of the polls. What I wish to suggest is a more subtle process: it is natural that "predominantly conservative people" should like the polls, because polls lend themselves to conservative interpretations of what the public is thinking.

One of the quaint discoveries of recent years is that popular opinion is generally conservative. Of course this is not a discovery at all. Every politician since Julius Caesar has known it. Disraeli had no doubt about it; his

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notion of Tory Democracy, which was full of insights into the nature of popular opinion, was based on this assumption. Lenin would have thought it infantile to rely on the revolutionary impulses of the people. But because we live at the end of an age of revolutions and popular movements that appear to have been liberal or left-wing, and at the end also of the long dominance of New Deal-Fair Deal-Great Society politics in the United States, it has come as something of a shock to many people to recognize, as if it were new, the old truth that the people "out there" usually are more conservative than their representatives and leaders; that when popular opinion is allowed to express itself directly in the political system—for example, in referendums—popular opinion is *generally* one of the strongest conservative forces in democratic politics. The polls on specific issues are like referendums.

Is it a surprise to anyone that popular opinion is in favor of the death penalty, that it thinks that the courts do not deal harshly enough with criminals, that it opposes the use of government funds to provide abortions for the poor, and that over the centuries it has taken similar attitudes on a thousand and one issues? Most reforms in every democracy have been carried out in the teeth of the popular fear of and resistance to change. The popular voice generally can be relied on to strengthen conservative attitudes about war, defense, civil liberties, law'n'order, race, welfare, and the many other social questions in which the survival of traditional values is at issue. To measure popular opinion is usually, therefore, to measure what is predominantly conservative opinion; and if proof again is needed, we may find it in Congress today.

It is universally agreed that the 1974 and 1976 crops of Democratic freshmen in the House are strikingly conservative. The explanation lies in the character of their relationships with their constituents. Even while they use the label of their party, they hold their party at arm's length. It is not mainly through its organs that they keep in touch with their constituents. Instead they maintain a close contact with local interest groups, and rely heavily on the polls they commission in their districts. It is inevitable that they will incline to be conservative, since the polls are giving them conservative readings of opinion in their constituencies, which in turn determine how they vote.

But there is a second reason why the polls must lead to conservative conclusions. They claim to be a more "scientific" way of measuring popular opinion than the rough-and-ready means of the past. There is in fact no evidence that they are, but it is as a *scientific method* that the polls are justified, and it is this which gives them their plausibility. Science has to have something to investigate, even if it is only an equation in the mind of Einstein. Even if there is only a black hole, it has to have a hole to look into. In other words, science has to have something on the table, like a butterfly pinned to a board, even if only nothingness. Therefore the "scientific" pollster has to assume that there is a "public opinion" already there on every issue for him to examine. Of course there is no such thing. What deserves to be called public opinion—as distinct from the popular opinion I have been describing—has to be brought into being. When the producers of television news in Britain do not know how to fill their program, they send their reporters out to do interviews with people on the streets. They call it "Two minutes of *Vox Pop*," and that puts instant popular opinion in its place.

When an exotic issue such as the Panama Canal treaties is suddenly forced into the popular consciousness, one cannot just go out and ask people their instant opinions and claim that one is revealing the public opinion that has formed about it. The public opinion that counts must, to an important extent which the polls cannot help belittling, be formed by leadership. It also can then be altered by leadership. It is not there by itself.

Perhaps the weakest chapter in George Gallup's book, *The Sophisticated Poll Watcher's Guide*, is on "Public Opinion Polls and Leadership." He sets up the simplest criticisms that are made of the polls on this score, and so is easily able to defend the polls against them. He does not come to grips with the fact that the polls weaken the idea of leadership, not so much because the leaders follow them slavishly—although unhappily this seems to be more and more true—but because their own methods must assume the existence of a public opinion even when there is none. The popular opinion that the polls present to politicians, therefore, is necessarily an exaggeration of the strength of popular conviction on any issue. Simply by saying that it exists and has been measured, they persuade the politicians to pay grave attention to it. This inevitably has a conservative influence. Confronted by some new idea or proposal, the popular voice is likely at first to be fearful. To make it acceptable is the work of leadership. But when there is the "scientific" evidence that "public opinion" is already formed and strong on some subject, the politicians are likely to decide that leadership is futile and will earn them only defeat at the next election.

The polls presented in the current issue of *Public Opinion* offer two examples of what I am describing. The first popular reaction to the Panama Canal treaties was extremely hostile. That is exactly what one would have

Coming Next Week:

John Osborne With Carter in the Third World

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expected. But President Carter, and also many senators and representatives, chose to take a lead on the question. The result has been a dramatic decline in the opposition to the treaties. Out of the first popular reaction a public opinion has been formed by the use of the political process. Precisely the opposite has happened in the case of the Equal Rights Amendment. The opposition to it in the polls has risen by almost the same amount as the opposition to the treaties has dropped. There is only one explanation of this: there has been no real leadership on this question from the politicians who support it. It has not been made a primary concern of the President, and the senators and representatives who are in favor of it have dithered. The field has been left to popular organizations and movements that act directly on the popular fears. Many of the 1974 and 1976 Democrats admit in private that they still are personally in favor of ERA, but that the polls of popular opinion in their constituencies bid them to be silent. If so much attention were not paid to popular opinion, there cannot be the slightest doubt that ERA would have been ratified by now. This is a classic example of where the unfiltered popular voice is in direct conflict with the genuinely public opinion that is represented in political institutions. In the absence of political leadership, it is the popular voice reflected in the polls that wins.

Conservatives are necessarily ambivalent about popular opinion in a democracy. They may recite Burke's great defense of representative institutions in his insistence that politicians should be the representatives and not the delegates of their constituents (one of the unnoticed acts of intellectual piracy in this century, by the way, has been the hijacking of Burke by conservatives) and conservatives by temperament and by philosophy should object to the popular voice having too direct a say in the political process. Yet the popular voice again and again comes to their rescue, often providing the only dependable support for their causes. One could go through the pages of the *National Review*, which really ought to be the voice of quixotic aristocratic sentiments, and show that nevertheless it is always ready to point to the popular voice in the polls for support. It is sad and affecting, but the Buckleys will stoop to conquer. We are told that this is what "the people" want and believe, which is hardly the ground on which one would expect a conservative to take his stand. The polls are the registers of this voice of the *vulgus*, this form of direct democracy, and the conservatives are pathetically ready to fawn and grovel to it.

Anyone who doubts that it is a form of direct democracy that the polls foster should read Gallup's book. He quotes Lord Bryce as saying that the next and final stage in the development of democracies would be reached when the will of the people could be known at all times and without the need of "election machinery." He goes on: "The public opinion poll supplies this [non-election] machinery, not perfectly, but certainly better than any other means." He is proclaiming that polls are superior to elections. That is not all: "The assumption that Congress does reflect accurately the will of the majority on these issues and is, therefore, a good barometer of opinion on these issues, has led many individuals astray." He is proclaiming that polls are superior to Congress. The majority will should always prevail on specific issues. Yet at the beginning of any movement for reform, we know where the majority usually takes its stand, and where it often remains even when the reform has been enacted. If we had to rely on the majority to bring about improvements, most of us would probably still be indentured servants.

But I would go further and say that the polls are not really an index of *public* opinion at all. My definition of what constitutes "the public" may seem novel to some, but it has lain at the heart of western political thought since the days of the Greek city-states. The public is not the herd of the people, an amorphous mass of individuals whose heads are merely to be counted, as if they were no more than cattle. The public is created by political activity, and is given its voice in political institutions. Public opinion is the popular voice when it has been filtered through a political process. One of the functions of that process is to take into account the fact that people's attitudes are far more complex than they appear when they are uttered as instant opinions. Someone may believe or want A, but also believe or want B; if he finds that A and B are in conflict, he will have to abandon or at least modify one of them. This adjustment of interests and opinions in the individual voter is what takes place when he or she goes to the ballot box, just as the adjustment of more general interests and opinions takes place in the traffic and wheeling and dealing of Congress. It is in this process that "the people" becomes a public.

But no such adjustment is required when people answer the questions in a poll. They can well say that they want both A and B, even when they are in conflict. The political process in fact forces each individual to be a public in himself or herself. Or to put it another way, it forces the individual to be a citizen. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the support for George Wallace in the polls was usually about 20 percent, sometimes pushing up to about 25 percent. But when the election came, his support was halved. What had happened was that enough whites, who may have supported Wallace on the issue of race, found that they were other things as well as being white. A white Polish Catholic union member of the Democratic party had to adjust his own various interests and needs and opinions within himself. He had been forced to act responsibly. Answering a question in the polls, he may be as irresponsible as he likes. This is what one means by saying that the individual is made a citizen.

"While elections may reveal the general direction that the majority of voters wish governing bodies to

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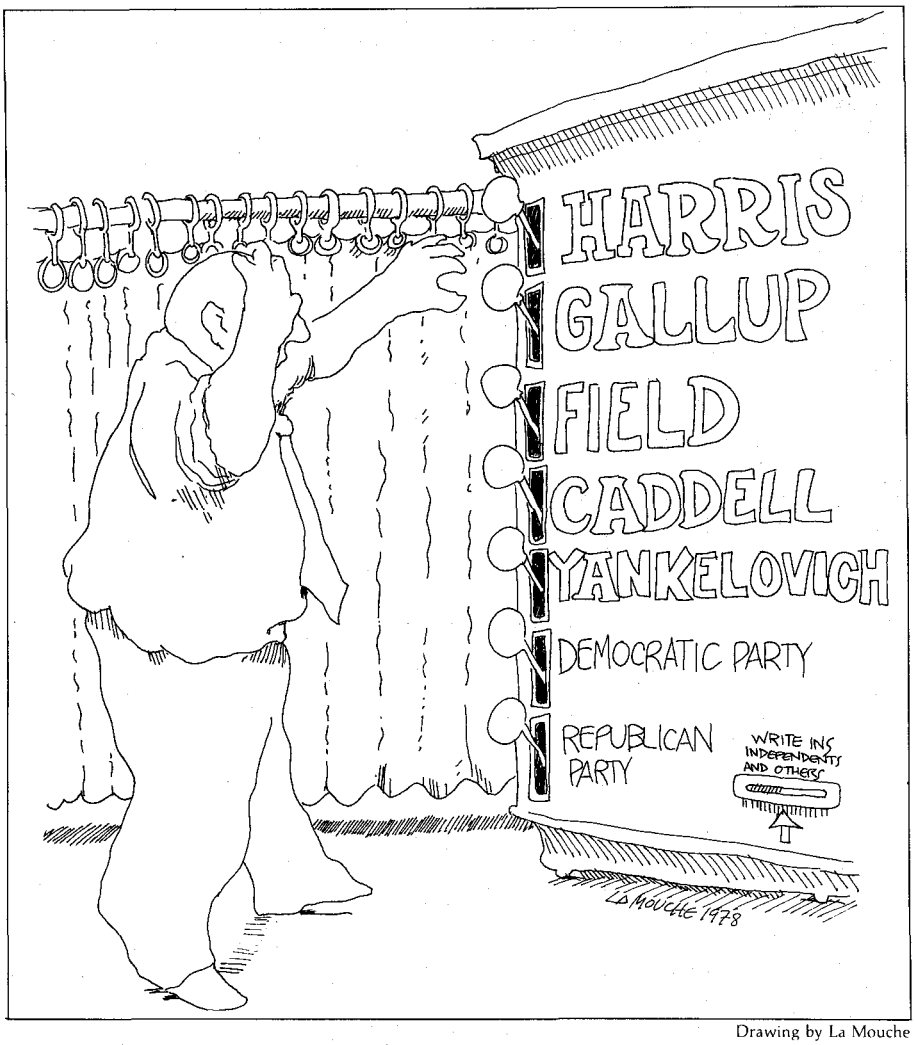

Drawing by La Mouche

take," says Gallup, "they are typically a poor and often misleading guide to specific legislation." Gallup wants people to be able to register their views on specific issues, one by one, in order to determine what specific legislation should be passed. That could only mean that people would be able to vote, as they do in the polls, without having to reconcile their conflicting interests and opinions; and this in turn could produce only a series of disconnected selfish acts of Congress, from which no sense of a more general public interest ever would have a chance of emerging. On every issue a satisfied or fearful majority would make the policy of the country, and anyone who doubts this should write down the popular attitudes on specific questions that are recorded in *Public Opinion*, and see what kind of political actions would reflect these attitudes. In fact there would be no government, but only an anarchy of whim and prejudice. One cannot govern by instant opinion.

Moreover only the political process gives minorities—by their influence in the ballot box and therefore on the legislative bodies—any chance of claiming and protecting their rights. How can a minority claim to be considered in a poll, when the poll is interested only in discovering what the majority think? What success would the civil rights movement have had in the 1960s if Congress and, for that matter, the Supreme Court had taken its lead from the public opinion polls? A political voice had to be created and then take its stand *against* the popular voice. On other topics, it still has to do so.

In his excellent book on the polls, *Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics*, Michael Wheeler says of Ben Wattenberg's and Richard Scammon's influential work, *The Real Majority*, that it "cynically exploited the polls to clothe the authors' personal political dogma in the sacred robes of public opinion." (Naturally, Scammon also is on the board of *Public Opinion.*) Scammon and Wattenberg conveniently summarized their thesis: "The great majority of the voters in America are unyoung, unpoor, and unblack; they are middle-aged, middle-class, and middle-minded. . . . It can safely be said that the only extreme that is attractive to the large majority of American voters is the extreme center." Wheeler's accusation that they manipulate the polls to suit their own thesis is interesting, but the more interesting fact is that the polls themselves, by their very nature, manipulate *us*. Wattenberg's own contribution to the current issue of his magazine—the lead article, giving advice to Jimmy Carter on how to win in 1980—simply repeats and reinforces the thesis that a Democrat can only win by fixing his eyes on the "middle-aged, middle-class, and middle-minded" rather than on "the young, the poor, the black." As might be expected, the tenor of most of the other articles on special issues says much the same.

An article on "The New Politics of Jobs" argues that we may be returning to the politics of class rather than the politics of race, which dramatically ignores the fact that black unemployment is so much higher than white unemployment. Of the Bakke case, another article asks in the headline, "How Would It Be Decided at the Bar of Public Opinion?"—as if we don't know! And of course yet another article finds that "traditional values" are "regnant," which is of course easy to prove from any poll and anyhow begs all kinds of questions. But it is that phrase—"the bar of public opinion"—that summarizes it all. There is no such bar outside the full working of the political process, and if there were it should not be paid any attention other than that of curiosity. Otherwise we may all stay "middle-aged, middle-class, and middle-minded," just like Scammon and Wattenberg, which some would regard as a fate worse than death.

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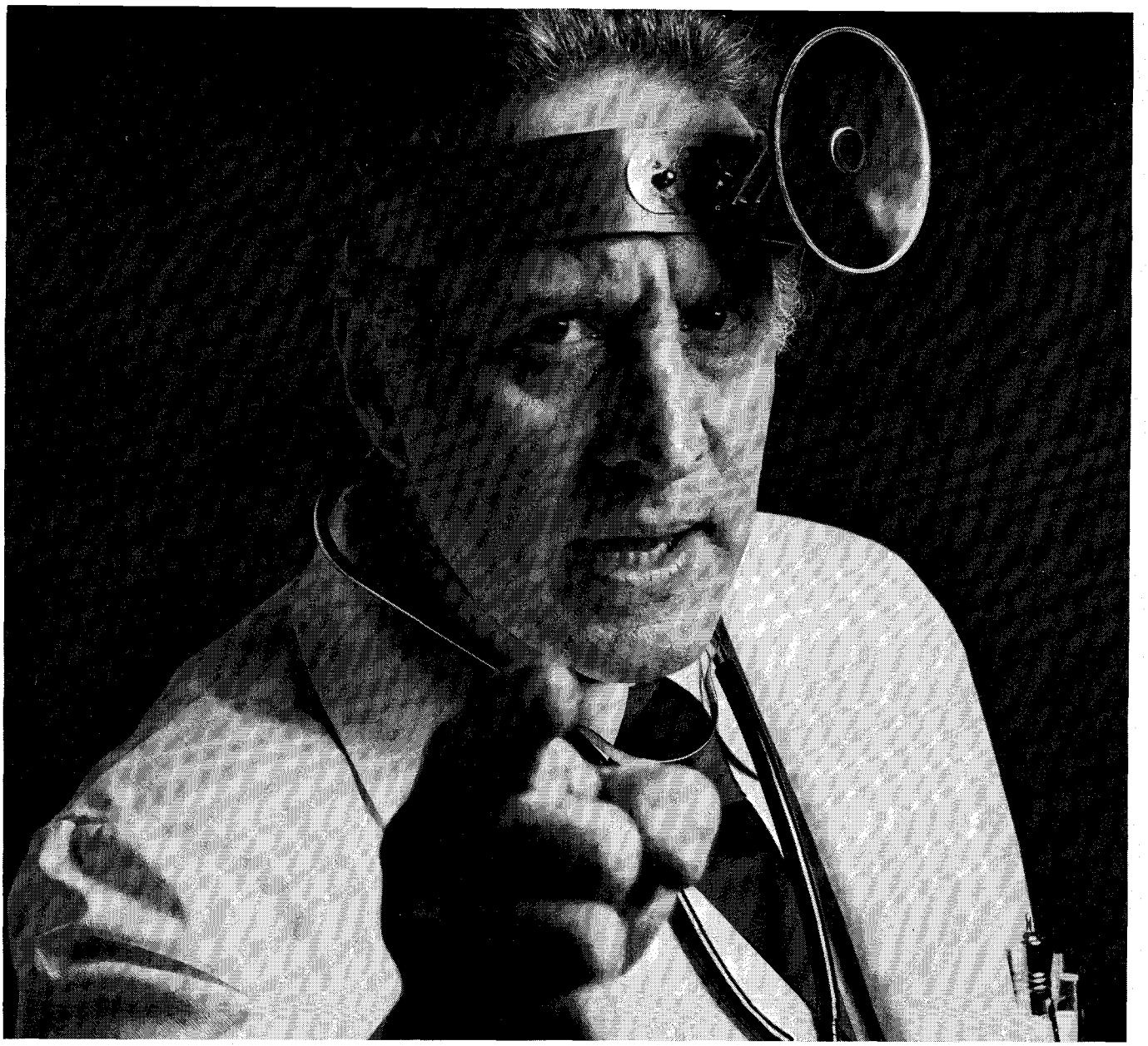

"Ætna, heal thyself."

In recent months, Ætna has been blunt in criticizing some expensive flaws in America's health care system.

Our bluntness has brought us, in return, equally blunt criticism of ourselves:

A hospital administrator from Illinois says that Ætna's *own*

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insurance plans have encouraged overuse of hospitals—since we pay for some procedures only when the insured person is hospitalized, even though out-patient treatment might cost less. (He's right. Some plans do this. We need to work harder to change them.[1])

Several doctors asked how we could claim to "give consumers a stake in holding down costs" when we're still selling health insurance that has little or no deductible.[2]

Another physician says that skyrocketing malpractice insurance premiums have forced him to increase the charges to his patients.[3]

Another accuses Ætna of "scapegoatism" and "kicking the dog," and a hospital representative contends "you attack us."[4]

To these last charges we plead "not guilty." Our criticism is aimed at the *health care system* and not at doctors or hospitals—although all participants (including Ætna) must share some responsibility. Most worthwhile changes in society bring with them strong disagreements and public debate. Slowing the runaway costs of this system needs open discussion now. Ætna will keep focusing on the flaws we see. And we'll keep welcoming—and responding to—the views of those who disagree with us most strongly.

Ætna wants insurance to be affordable.

[1]In the last few years we've intensified our efforts to correct this imbalance: Ætna health insurance plans are covering more and more kinds of out-patient care. Examples: Post-hospital convalescent facilities (since 1969); free-standing ambulatory surgical centers (since 1973); pre-admission testing (experimentally since 1970—now being extended nationally); and post-hospital home health care already available in many plans.

[2]This is also true. Although Ætna has been stressing the value of deductibles and co-insurance since the mid-1950's, the physicians' criticism is fair: we *are* still writing insurance plans that have no deductibles for hospital charges. The pressure to "give the customer what he wants" is a constant in business. Ætna, like most insurers, has given in to it too many times when it may not have been in society's long-term interest.

[3]An increase, starting in the early 1970's, in the number and size of liability suits caught insurers by surprise, and drastically forced up premiums to cover legal costs, court awards and out-of-court settlements. Part of the solution, Ætna believes, is to reform an increasingly *dis*-torted tort law system. This is a subject as controversial and important as the health care system itself.

[4]In response to our earlier advertisements, several doctors wrote along these lines: "Ætna, being a large company, can afford to take pages in national magazines and push its opinions; I, as a private practitioner of medicine, obviously cannot." This advertisement is a recognition of that point of view. But we don't think that any of us involved in the health care system can afford to overlook our own contribution to the problem. Each of us should give some criticism, take some—*and act on it.*

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on theater

What Price Freedom?

Curse of the Starving Class (Newman). Sam Shepard is phenomenal. He is the best practicing American playwright, I think, now that Tennessee Williams is doodling. Since 1964 he has written about 30 plays of differing lengths which have been produced all over the US and in some other countries. He is world-famous in the theater world. (And this without ever having been produced on Broadway. One play, *Operation Sidewinder*, was done at the Beaumont in 1970 under Jules Irving's management.) Several volumes of his plays have been published. But part of the Shepard phenomenon is that, in a sorry way, he represents the course of US playwriting in the last 20 years. After all this time Shepard continues to "show talent." It's the most dazzling talent we have at the moment, but showing talent is not quite the same as making art. (As Harold Clurman once said, "America is lousy with talent.") Much of Shepard's work is unforgettable, seen or read once. Very little of it is worth another visit, which is surely one valid test of real quality.

Curse of the Starving Class (published by Urizen Books last year) is another of Shepard's heartbreakers—it contains so much, yet it finally comes to not enough. First produced in London a year ago when Shepard was living there, it deals with California sheep raisers and thus immediately strikes a distinctive Shepard note. He often deals with non-urban people, often in the West; most of our playwrights are urban in setting and feeling. There's a family of four: the father, a former Air Force pilot, now boozing most of the time; a kooky shiftless mother, scheming to sell the place and scurry off to Europe with her children; a son about 20, easy and competent but frightened of his father; a daughter, sturdy, frightened of no one.

The play's first virtue, as in most Shepard, is that all the roles are good acting parts. No play survives in the theater without that virtue and some survive that have no other virtue. Shepard writes dialogue that actors can *use*, in situations that have good rising motion, for characters that leave the audience finally with a high opinion of the actors even though/if the actors have concentrated on the characters.

And beyond this, which might in itself be true of a thin and silly play, Shepard stokes a simmering heat under the whole play, even under the punchy comic sections, a ruthlessness, a kind of anger that makes the essential drama seem to be not in the story but between the writer himself and the world. Once again a Shepard play testifies to the fact that he is a true man of the theater: he doesn't see life as material for drama, he sees life *as* drama.

But once again he has plunged, so to speak, into a turbulent pool simply because he knows how to dive and swim in turbulence; and, to finish the figure, he has surfaced some time later only to head for the nearest shore without necessarily having intended to go there. *Starving Class* starts as sweaty, cartoon-character comedy—people living wildly and uncaringly in a poverty they not only don't take very seriously, they use it as a medium for farcical family life. They are something like John Steinbeck's Okies seen by Donald Barthelme. In the opening section the son is cleaning up the fragments of the front door that his drunken father broke down the night before, the mother comes out in a wrapper and is unconcerned to find the refrigerator nearly empty, the daughter comes out in her 4-H uniform carrying charts she made for a demonstration she's going to give at a fair on how to cut up a frying chicken. When she finds that her chicken is missing from the fridge, she gets furious. Her brother puts her charts on the floor and pisses on them. Pretty soon the boozy father comes home, providing for his brood by bringing them a large sack of artichokes.

The opening atmosphere, which persists through a good deal of the play, is hard to reconcile with the conclusion. The play ends as a paean to agrarian values, to those who love Nature and Space and Simple Things and who are being forced off their land by exploitative commercial combines. It becomes a drama of rustic simplicity being strangled by city greed. That ending is simply not in the play's beginning: moralism has been tacked on to a work whose vitality is in its passionate rowdyism and its very oblique social comment.

Shepard is not much of a thinker: when he does think, or feels he needs to, he usually comes up with the same theme—the battle between the pure and the impure in America. And when he needs evil, he usually calls on the movies to supply it: cinematized criminal types of various kinds. This deliberate use of movie types is part of Shepard's general method: the language and music of rock, spaceman fantasies, Wild West fantasies, gangster fantasies—pop-culture forms that he uses as his building blocks, rituals of contemporary religion to heighten communion.

My discomfort with Shepard is not with this symbology, which he often exalts into pungent theater poetry, but with his careless grabbing at chunks of it

Films Worth Seeing

Close Encounters of the Third Kind. If Henry Adams came back and saw it, he'd nod and say, "I told you so."

The Confessions of Winifred Wagner. German documentary interview with the composer's 78-year-old daughter-in-law, an unrepentant friend of Hitler. Urbanely chilling.

Saturday Night Fever. John Travolta sensational in this heated dance-and-diddle story of a city within a city.

Summer Paradise. A Swedish family on vacation, so it has to be both pretty and shadowy. Good directing debut by Gunnel Lindblom, a Bergman actress.

SK

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to get him out of his dramatic difficulties. The best work of his that I know, *The Tooth of Crime*, which casts the rivalries of rock stars in the mode of a '30s gangster picture and which spits along in wonderfully bitten-out language, completes what it's about through the form in which it is put. But the gangsters at the end of *Starving Class* have just been shoved on stage by the scruffs of their necks, to commit a murder that is grossly disproportionate to the reason given. To heighten the inconsistencies, just previously the son has wandered naked across the stage, put on his sobered-up father's drunk-soaked clothes, and has sat himself down in front of the now-loaded refrigerator to stuff his face—in an orgy less of starved gluttony than of rarefied symbolism.

Shepard is for me the archetypal post-Broadway American playwright: the leader of a generation dating from the early 1960s that grew up without the ambition that had dominated previous writers, serious and otherwise—the ambition toward Broadway. Even though the works of some of these newer writers eventually get to Broadway, they have rejected the constrictions and intents of the commercial theater for the freedoms of Off and Off Off Broadway. But, as with everything else everywhere, they have paid a price.

I do not for the smallest fragment of a second suggest that Shepard would have benefited from the advice of a show-shop wizard like George Abbott, that Shepard should have rewritten this play or any of his plays in New Haven or Boston on the way to New York. I do mean that he is the leader of a group which has used its freedom in order not to grow. I know there are earlier versions of many OB and OOB plays, I know that there are summer and winter and non-seasonal theater conferences where plays are read and criticized and discussed. I also know the results. I see, for instance, that Shepard is as wonderfully gifted now as he was when he wrote *La Turista* in 1968 but is not notably more in control of his plays as organic works. If I say that one cannot discern in the post-1960 playwrights the increased technical skill discernible through the careers of, say, Robert E. Sherwood and Elmer Rice, the response will of course be that one prefers the freedom and commitment of the post-1960 people to the middle-class tailored seriousness of the former. To which *my* response would be: Why must one choose? Between art and freedom? The reaction to the strictures of Broadway has been an overreaction: *pace* all the latter-day theater conferences, the away-from-Broadway theater in New York and elsewhere has functioned more as a conduit than as a sieve. It's too broad a statement but not really untrue to say that the non-Broadway theater has pushed liberated talent at the expense of refining it, and now we have a group of playwrights on either side of 40—Shepard the best—who are not much better now than when they started. Perhaps it's time for the non-commercial theater to learn the idea of discipline—*to its own ends*—from that nasty old commercial theater.

This production of *Starving Class* is firmly and sympathetically directed by Robert Woodruff, who knows how to graph the action in and under the dialogue. James Gammon as the boozy father, Ebbe Roe Smith as the lean and moody son, Pamela Reed as the gutsy, sassy daughter, are excellent. *Excellent.* Of the principals only Olympia Dukakis, as the mother, seems to be artificially acting her way down to a stratum beneath her.

John Canaday on art

Hanson and LeWitt

Before space runs out in this column this time, something has to be said about the art of Sol LeWitt in his current show at the Museum of Modern Art, a task I approach with reluctance because it involves knocking a chip off my own shoulder, but first I have the pleasant obligation of offering an apology to the Whitney Museum, an unusual situation since I have said a lot of unkind things about the Whitney from time to time, and never before have had to back down. There is something about the Whitney—I don't know just what it is, a hangover no doubt from its early days when it refused to get excited about the kind of American art that was exciting me—that preconditions me to be more aware of what it does worst rather than what it does best, a matter of habit on my part and obviously quite unfair. Habitually I think of the Whitney as a museum that tends to be honest rather than imaginative, conscientious rather than inspired, and a little awkward when it decides to get with it, like an overage maiden lady venturing for the first time into a singles bar.

Since I truly want to love the Whitney, I am delighted to find that I made a booboo in my article before this one in *TNR* (Mar. 4). If you didn't read it, or if you did read it and do not find its message burned into your memory in letters of fire, let me say that I was talking about the Whitney's Duane Hanson show and objecting to the installation. Mr. Hanson is the hyper-realist sculptor who casts figures from life, paints them naturalistically, wigs them, dresses them, and supplies them with appropriate accessories such as shopping bags for shoppers, syringes for junkies, and the like. His sculptures strike most people, including most critics, as little more than super-waxworks, making the Whitney exhibition—they all say it—"a fun show." My contention is that Hanson's people are the urbanized descendents of the provincial citizens of Gopher Prairie, Winesburg, Ohio, Spoon River, and Tilbury Town, and that this sculptor sees them, three generations later, as victims of a society that has given them all the riches of products in the TV commercials and left them spiritual paupers. They no longer have even their smugness to fall back on in their frustration.

Scattered around the brightly lit Whitney galleries in such a way that they and the crowd of live visitors intermingle, these figures lose their character as sculptures and become illusionistic tricks. An effigy of a guard is placed where visitors are fooled into going up and asking him questions. Worse, a poignant sculpture of a tired waitress has been installed down in the cafeteria where you are likely to call out to her, "Miss—oh Miss—" for service. The result is that the giggle quotient of a waxworks museum cancels out the social message that Mr. Hanson surely intends.

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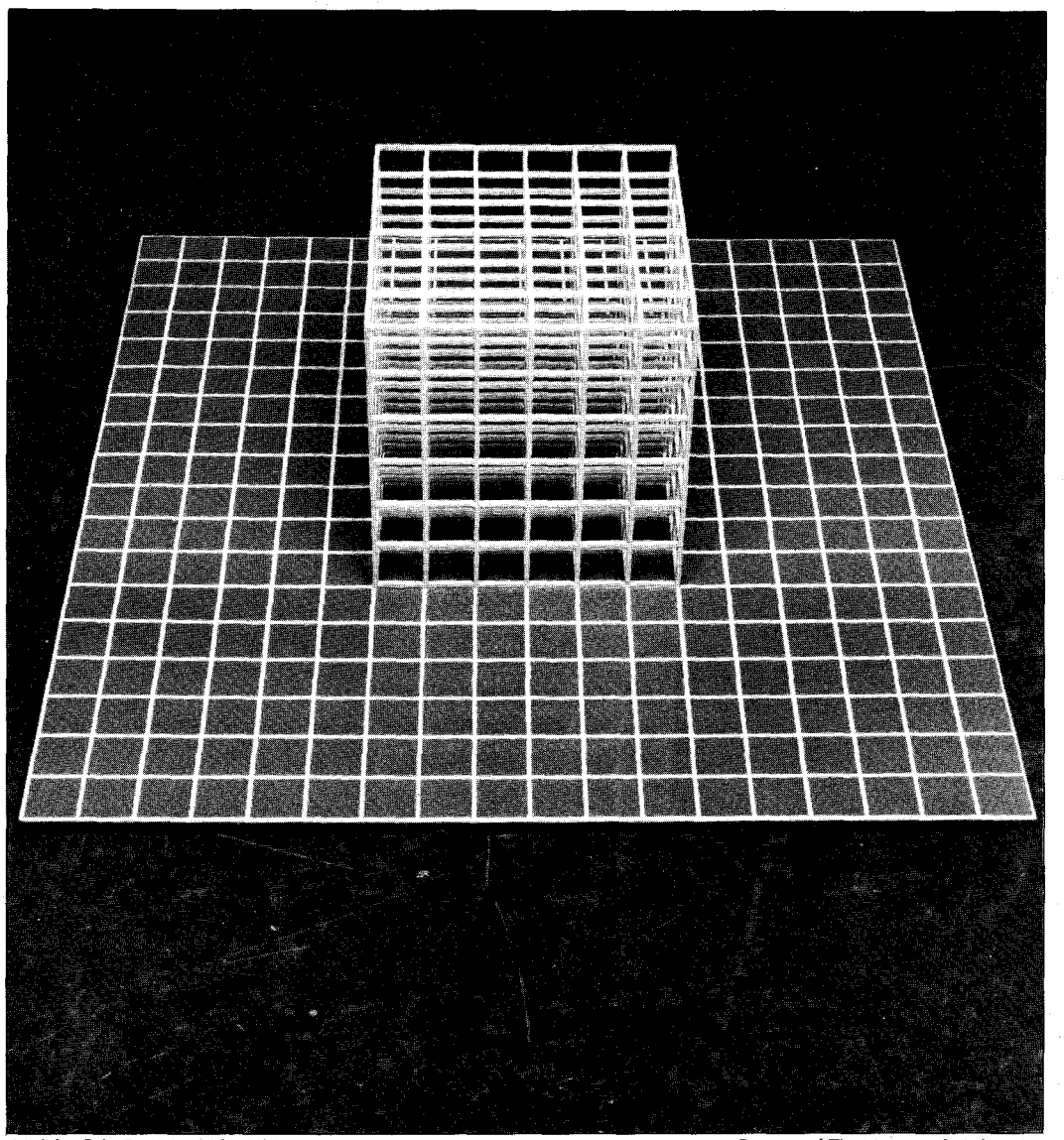

"Modular Cube/Base" (1968) by Sol LeWitt Courtesy of The Museum of Modern Art

I fussed at the Whitney for this installation, and now discover that it was Mr. Hanson's own idea, based, I take it, on the premise that mingling with the crowd as they do, the sculptures would be inextricably fused with real life and hence would be revealed more intensely. No premise could be more mistaken. We see the living originals of Mr. Hanson's people on the streets every day of our lives and pay them no mind. The installation should have set these people-effigies apart to dramatize them, to force us out of our habit of passing them by and into regarding them as something more than superb imitations of surface reality.

If I had been installing the exhibition (hindsight always being the critic's prerogative), I would have blotted out all light except spotlights on each sculpture, isolating them from the crowd, making them lonely within it, paralleling the bepuzzlement and frustration that their originals feel, and dramatizing their ordinariness so that spectators would have to see them in a way comparable to the way Arthur Miller forced us to see Willy Loman, a comparable victim of our society's false values.

So much for the apology. I'm sorry, Whitney.

Now to the Museum of Modern Art for the difficult part.

Sol LeWitt is a representative—the best, to my mind—of that form of extreme abstraction called minimal art, which is based on the principle that less is more—a catchy, seductive phrase that I wish had never been coined. Up to a point the principle is valid; it helps get rid of meaningless clutter. The trouble is that the minimalists do not recognize a point of diminishing returns. If less is truly more, even less is even more, and less and less and less is more and more and more, until absolute zero is absolutely everything, at which point even the memory of art vanishes and you are left with a void.

The last visible development of minimal art is conceptual art, where concept alone is important and execution incidental. As an extreme minimalist Mr. Lewitt pointed the way to conceptualism and is a conceptualist himself insofar as he regards the schemes for his projects, which can usually be stated as mathematical exercises, as more important than the projects' realizations, which he is usually content to leave to other people.

I have to admit that my prejudice against minimal-conceptual art is aggravated by its abuses. As far away as Brazil I have been confronted by scruffy kids identical hair-by-hair with their New York and New Orleans and San Francisco and Chicago and Podunk post-conceptual counterparts telling me that art is no longer a matter of producing anything or even of putting ideas on paper, but is simply a way of life. You don't have to *do* anything. You just say you're an artist, and you're an artist, and that is that. Zero, however, still looks like zero to me.

Because I want art to be a revelation of life, I am put out to find that Mr. LeWitt's exhibition, which is totally bloodless, is a beautiful show just to look at. Eavesdropping on the mouthings of one guide for a group of solemn, culturally ambitious visitors, I heard references to the relationship between Mr. LeWitt's pristine cubes or cube skeletons, and Oriental philosophy. I am told that another lecturer connects these with Ghilberti's doors on the Baptistery in Florence because the narrative reliefs on those doors are enclosed within square borders. All of this sounds like groping to me, an effort to graft meaning onto constructions whose beauty is that of pure design based on precise calculations of proportions and their immaculate presentation in immaculate areas designed specifically to enshrine them.

If the references to Oriental philosophies are valid, I have seen nothing in Oriental art that approached philosophical expression in the same way, and I can't help feeling that the reference to Ghiberti is tommyrot. If you want historical precedence, go instead to Leonardo's notebooks and make parallels with his geometrical analyses serv-

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ing such ends as the study of natural forms and the creation of useful man-made ones (machines, architecture), where abstract beauty is corollary to function within life.

Or perhaps my irritation comes from the presentation of Mr. LeWitt's minimalism or conceptualism as the natural end result and high point—Parnassus piled on Everest—away up there in the esthetic ether—of modern art. This is not art in any humanistic sense, but only drawing-board design of high quality. It occurs to me, that if the exhibition had been presented as a design show only (it makes incidental reference to Mr. LeWitt's activities as a designer), I would have been less put out by having found it so good to look at.

Well, it *was* good to look at. I admit it. I accept. But naturally I'm not happy about it.

Books Considered

Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case by Allen Weinstein

(Knopf; $15)

It's not another Dreyfus Case, although some Hiss supporters may try to make it look that way. No, it's more like the Battle of Blenheim, in Southey's version, all skulls and sighs;

"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

It made a tremendous amount of noise and did considerable damage to a number of individuals; it wrecked the lives of the two antagonists and hurt many more; it gave Tricky Dick Nixon a first leg up in his clamber to the White House; if it did not let loose the baying dogs of Joe McCarthy, it certainly whooped them on. But it was not even a small step forward for the human race; its overall result was to leave the world a little dingier than before. And it hasn't quite petered out yet.

Alger Hiss in 1948 was apparently the very model of everything a rising young civil servant should be: alert, able, ambitious, a darling of the Establishment and of the many nice people who were proud to know him. He was in charge of protocol at Yalta, he set up the first meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco; Dean Acheson was his friend and mentor. Whittaker Chambers was short and fat, a seedy ex-Communist who worked for *Time*, where he made more enemies than friends—a Graham Greene character, murky with melodramatic brooding over suicide and doom. It was a delightful shock for the newspapers when Chambers publicly accused Hiss of being a fellow Communist and of having aided and abetted Chambers in passing confidential government documents to Moscow.

Hiss thereupon sued Chambers for libel. After much confused investigation, a grand jury indicted Hiss (not Chambers) for perjury. There were two trials, both in New York. The first trial ended in a hung jury (8 to 4 for convicting Hiss), the second found Hiss guilty, and the judge sentenced him to five years in prison. He actually served three years and eight months.

Hiss was disbarred from law practice, lost his State Department pension, and could find only poorly paid jobs. Shortly after he came out of jail he and his wife separated; they have not, however, been divorced. He has spent the 28 years since his trial trying to vindicate himself and turn the tables on his accuser.

Chambers lost his job at *Time*, and wrote a best-selling autobiography, *Witness*, which helped pay some of his debts. To some readers (including this one) the book was Dostoyevskian, to others "maudlin prose." Later he wrote regularly for William Buckley's right-wing *National Review*, until a series of heart attacks made him a semi-invalid. The last attack, in 1961, finished him.

Now the tide has turned in Hiss's

Abhor... one hour of idleness as you would be ashamed of one hour of drunkenness."

So wrote Puritan parson Thomas Shephard to his son at Harvard, as quoted in **THE WORK ETHIC IN INDUSTRIAL AMERICA, 1850-1920** by Daniel T. Rodgers.

In this sparkling piece of intellectual history, Rodgers traces "those threads of ideas that came together to affirm work as the core of the moral life." He explores what happened to the belief in the sanctity of honest toil when that belief collided with the facts of life in the age of industrialization and wage-slavery. He chronicles the gradual growth of the realization that slower living, vacations, play, and rest also contribute to productivity.

The pieties of preachers, the earnestness of reformers, the precepts of children's literature, the rhetoric of politicians, the impact of immigration, and the struggle for women's rights are all part of Rod Rodgers's story. If this story is an ironic one, Rodgers notes, "it is not because the mechanical servants ran amok but because in it one can watch an ethos destroy itself."

THE WORK ETHIC IN INDUSTRIAL AMERICA, 1850-1920
by **Daniel T. Rodgers** $15.00
University of Chicago Press
Chicago 60637

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favor. A British reporter recently cabled from New York: "Today, Alger Hiss is a respected figure in intellectual circles and most American liberals believe that he was deliberately framed." Hiss intends to bring suit to have the evidence in his case reviewed. His State Department pension has been restored and he has been re-admitted to the Massachusetts bar.

Five years ago Allen Weinstein, professor of history at Smith College, set to work on the vast midden of papers that have piled up over this case. He studied the evidence, pried loose from the reluctant FBI much hitherto "classified" material, and interviewed every key figure in the case who would see him. This required far-flung travel, sometimes to the Iron Curtain countries where some of them have gone to ground.

The result is this huge report—not so much a book to be read as a massive document to be pored over. I doubt if many readers will read it for pleasure or even read every word; but this book is now part of the Hiss Case: it has been placed in evidence, and before Hiss can be exonerated this book will have to be refuted.

Professor Weinstein, who never met Chambers, obviously does not find him an overly sympathetic character, but treats him with severe justice. Only once does he permit himself a small smile at Chambers's expense: "His health repaired and his spirits restored to a state of normal melancholy . . ." And not all the fresh material which Professor Weinstein produces is favorable to Chambers: e.g., he cites his written confession that he had been for a time a practicing homosexual—a document Chambers drew up for the FBI in expectation that Hiss's lawyers would press the same damaging charge. (Yes, Virginia, in those days homosexuals were "queer," not "gay.") They didn't, however.

Other new findings Professor Weinstein reports are more injurious to Hiss: e.g., that two years before the case broke, "almost all of the [State] Department security staff thought Hiss had been involved in some form of undercover Communist work"; and that Secretary Byrnes had begun to ease him out of the Department as a security risk.

As Professor Weinstein reminds us, facts can be disregarded with impunity (except in a court of law), and in the public estimate of this case they often have been disregarded. "Almost from the moment the 'facts' began to emerge

Alger Hiss leaving prison, 1953

Courtesy of Cornell Capa/Magnum Photos

in 1948, they congealed in partisan accounts, each side serving up a relatively simple morality tale . . . The episode became, for many, an article of faith. Thus Walter Lippmann told Richard Rovere . . . 'I know Alger Hiss. He couldn't be guilty of treason.' Some of Chambers's closest friends at *Time* argued with equal implacability on his behalf."

The accuser admitted in court that he had lied and had been a spy; the accused has admitted nothing to this day. He says: "I can't understand people who tell me they are ashamed about something. I have never done anything of which I am ashamed. I always mean to do what I do . . . By the time I am 80 I expect to be respected and venerated."

On the evidence—partly Chambers's testimony that he and his wife had been close friends of the Hisses (denied by them) and that he and Hiss had worked together in stealing state secrets for the Soviets, but mainly by microfilms of documents taken from government files and copied on Hiss's typewriter—the jury found Hiss guilty of perjury. (The graver charge of espionage, implicit in this verdict, could not be brought against either man, because the statute of limitations had quashed it.)

"Nothing has done more to legitimize public support for Alger Hiss," says Professor Weinstein, "than the disgrace and downfall of Richard Nixon . . . Hiss found himself transformed from a symbol of deception to one of injured innocence . . . Many Americans . . . could now consider Hiss exonerated without knowing the evidence, vindicated without the inconvenience of first demonstrating himself innocent."

If Professor Weinstein has correctly reviewed this case, as I think he has, the "new evidence" which the FBI has been

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forced to release can only underline the old; and if so, Alger Hiss would do well to let sleeping dogs lie. Without completely echoing Esther Chambers's anguished cry in court: "My husband is a decent citizen, a great man!" I believe with Lionel Trilling that Chambers was a "man of honor," and that "the more complex and sometimes embarrassing facts" (as Professor Weinstein calls them) go far to prove it. What Hiss is I have no idea; he seems to me simply—incredible.

T. S. Matthews

T.S. Matthews is a former associate editor of *The New Republic*, later editor of *Time*. His latest book is *Jacks or Better: A Narrative* (Harper & Row).

Figures of Thought: Speculations on the Meaning of Poetry, and Other Essays by Howard Nemerov

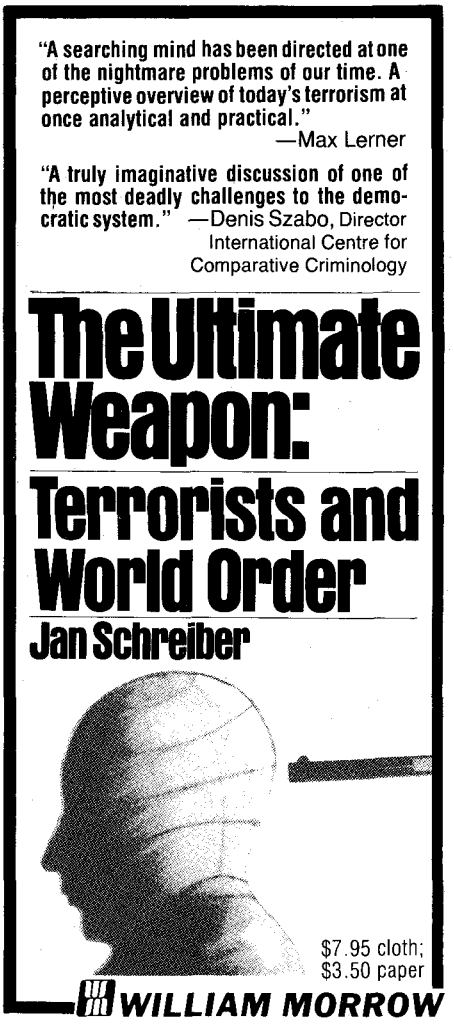
(Godine; $10)

Howard Nemerov has been praised by so many critics, and so justly, over the years, that he has become that not altogether enviable phenomenon—an uncontroversial writer. Rather like Eudora Welty, in her very different way; and Richard Wilbur; and Peter Taylor. Critics, and presumably readers, agree that these writers are superb. Individual stories or poems, occasionally even books, may be relatively weak or disappointing, but only within the context of the writer's general excellence: there is no doubt, or at any rate very little doubt, concerning the sustained high level of achievement. To say that Nemerov's new collection of essays and reviews matches the quality of his *Poetry and Fiction: Essays* (of 1963) and of his *Collected Poems* is simply to say that the book is a marvelous one, rewarding not only for what it tells us about poetry in general, and the poetry of Yeats, Williams, Shakespeare, Dante, Randall Jarrell, and others, in particular, but for what it tells us about the processes of the imagination. Nemerov is, quite simply, a brilliant mind; and in the interstices of an essay on, say, William Carlos Williams, or a wittily restrained review of Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, or a fanciful but ultimately serious digression on the poetic possibilities of Kenneth Burke's winter address, he will tell us remarkable things.

Figures of Thought consists of 19 essays, essay-reviews, and lectures on a variety of subjects, all of them linked by Nemerov's lifelong concern (obsessive? whimsical?) with the phenomenon of the human intellect ostensibly turning upon itself. *How* we perceive, how it qualifies (and perhaps determines) *what* we perceive—these have been the tantalizing, sometimes maddening riddles of much of his poetry. He is as philosophical a poet as Wordsworth, with whom he might be instructively compared, as metaphysically dense, quirky, and brooding as Stevens, with whom he has been compared; the dark, unanticipated humor of his observations frequently calls to mind Frost, who has also been somewhat underrated, measured against the "Modernist" pretensions of an Eliot or a Pound. All of Nemerov's essays are about the puzzle of human consciousness, but they are also about poetry itself: the poetic *process* and the *poetic* process. There is a sense in which the essays comprise an elliptical autobiography as well—an autobiography of the poet in his role as poet at a certain point in history.

Is Nemerov a "Romantic"? Is he a "Realist"? That he is a comic and satiric poet is obvious; perhaps he is also a "tragic" poet? He has been accused of being limited in his art by an "obsessive sanity of vision" (a felicitous phrase that must have amused him) but it might be argued that some of his finest poems, those in the 1967 volume *The Blue Swallows*, for instance, dramatize, in a characteristically understated way, certain of the agonies of the spirit encased in flesh that so wildly, and so brilliantly, tormented Yeats as an old man. Romantic, realist, comedian, satirist, a relentless and indefatigable brooder upon the most ancient of mysteries—Nemerov is not to be classified. The experience of reading his essays, like the experience of reading his poems, is simply one of being in an intimate relationship with a marvelously fluid, unpredictable imagination. Each of the essays is studded with wry and sometimes incidental observations that might be called wise, or profound, or cryptically amusing: "One of the things [the current preoccupation of poets with poetry] has seemed to me to mean is the end of poetry," Nemerov says mildly in "Modern Poetry"; he quotes Pound ("It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works") and adds, again mildly, "After which he sat down to write the *Cantos*." Elsewhere we are told that the principle of metaphor is, probably: "What men do is the visible sign of what they are."

"Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Skylark" is a meditation on what it is like "to be a poet" in our time, and it is not surprising that Nemerov discovers himself in the process of becoming, not being, in terms of his response to other poets—Milton, Keats, Shakespeare,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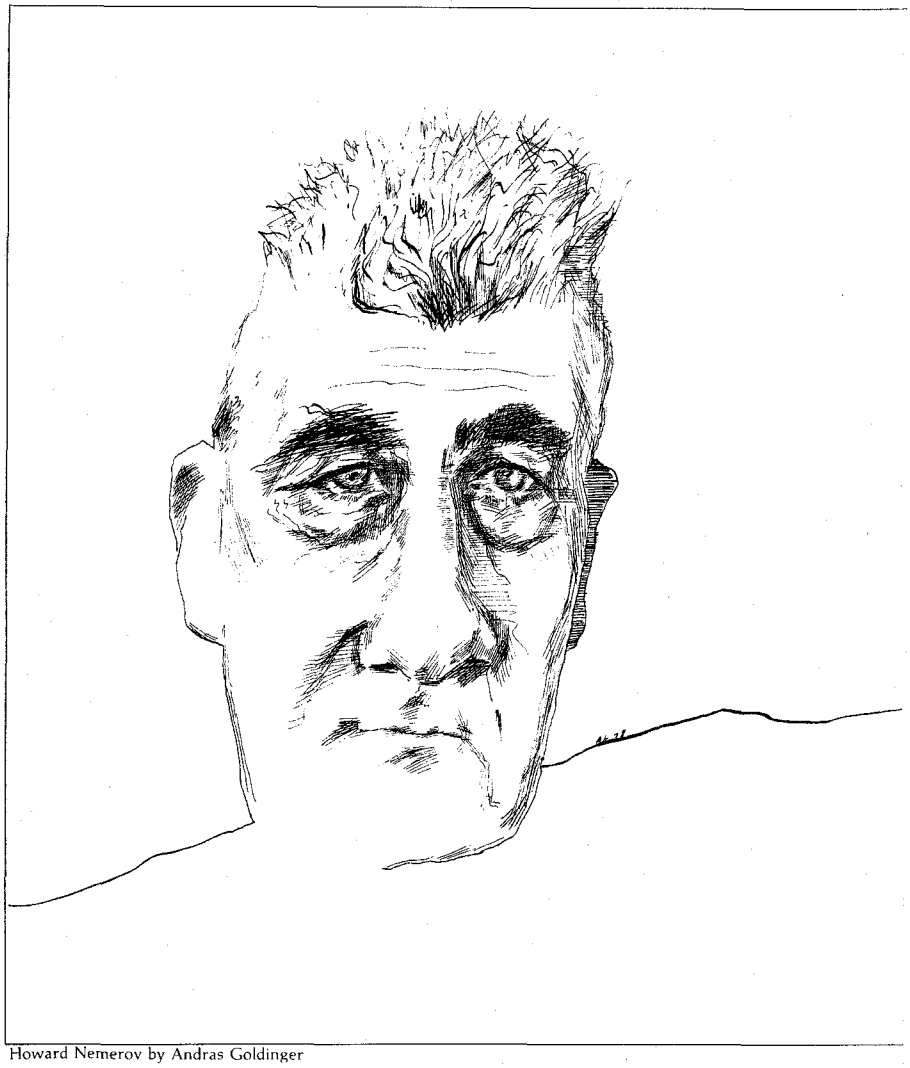
Eliot, Blake—and in his conviction that poetry is, in fact, an activity resistant to definition, an activity whose essence lies in its *necessary* resistance. Lofty; even a bit "religious"; a sacred commitment; yet not without the poet's sardonic awareness of his actual, existential plight—"You cannot make a living by writing verses, but you can make a quite good living by talking about writing verses." And again "poetry, like acne, like the development of secondary sexual characteristics, may belong to adolescence."

"Figures of Thought" turns Harold Bloom's Anxiety Thesis back on Bloom, and concludes with three melancholy laws which few readers of the essays of contemporary "uncanny" critics would contest:

> *1. That the life of the institutionalized intelligence, as by its own sort of entropy, grows ever more difficult and never less so.*
> *2. That intelligence itself, which is responsible for so much of the small freedom we have or can use, is intrinsically committed to determinism. That is one way of expressing the curse on knowledge.*
> *3. That the effort to render English unintelligible is proceeding vigorously at the highest levels of learning.*

"About Time" is an ingenious analysis of the metaphor *Time is Money* which begins with the poet contemplating the paradox that as he moves into the future at every instant he moves in just the same degree into the past, and concludes, quite convincingly, that "Money is time given permanent form—though of course only for a time." The invention of money has the unconscious object, then, of inventing a species of time with the ostensible properties of permanence. "Poetry and Meaning" turns upon the disturbing possibility that "poetry in English is fast coming to an end"—and it is possible that *meaning* itself is atrophying. The posture of the literary mind, Nemerov says, is increasingly "dry, angry, smart, jeering, cynical"; it is one of the unmentioned and possibly unmentionable dangers of poetry readings, "that any old garbage will go down all right if it's read with conviction"; the century has seen a "slow collapse in the idea of meaning." As the public languages of the media become ever more shrill and distracting, the languages of art and learning are in danger of growing hermetic, "as if they were the distorted mirror images of the public language." The Age of Art, or The Aesthetic Age, Nemerov states, is now over: it lasted from about 1850 to 1950 and its dominant characteristic was the claim that "salvation was by art alone." We are in another era now—its contours too hazy to be defined.

A pessimistic, even an apocalyptic



Howard Nemerov by Andras Goldinger

claim; detractors of Modernism might even charge Nemerov with that most horrific of evils—elitism. But Nemerov is nothing if not elitist (in the sense that he values, in art, the happy few whom tradition has deemed worthy of value) and his strengths have always consisted in his spirited, though sometimes quizzical, defense of this position. Apart from, esthetically uninvolved in, questions of social upheaval, an economy's on-going crisis, and the dissociation of an entire generation—or has it been two, or three—Nemerov in his poetry and essays has insisted upon a philosophical detachment that refines his work of the personal and allows him an ironist's cerebral authority. His shadow falls nowhere over his work—or nearly nowhere; when he speaks it is almost as if consciousness itself were given a voice.

"Speaking Silence" counters the usual academic method of teaching poetry (that is, "turning poems into prose") with a proposal that both students and teacher honor the untranslatable difficulties of a poem by *not* understanding them. Meditation upon a work of art will reveal the strangeness that is already there; it will not subject the work to a spiritless, efficient dissection. In the series of lectures that conclude the book, "What Was Modern Poetry?" Nemerov discusses in meticulous detail the relationship between image and metaphor (centering on an extremely illuminating discussion of three representative poems of William Carlos Williams), poetry and history (Yeats's visionary response to the Great Change of the early years of this century), and a number of poetic attempts to accommodate the metaphysical and psychological consequences of this Change, which amounts to a violent demythologizing of the universe. The essay, ending with a consideration of Randall Jarrell's poetry, makes the point that the Great Change, though felt as historical, is perhaps nothing more than the delayed realization that we are not—despite the strident claims of religion, of nationhood, and of legend—immortal. It is a beautifully-crafted essay, as reward-

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ing in its specific illuminations as in its general thesis.

The essays of *Figures of Thought* give flesh to speculations obliquely raised in the poems, and it might even be the case—I suspect Nemerov would be the first to agree—that they deal with these speculations almost *too* reverently. So it is appropriate in these circumstances to conclude with a few lines of Nemerov's poetry: the terse, haunting first stanza of "Idea":

Idea blazes in darkness, a lonely star.
The witching hour is not twelve, but one.
Pure thought, in principle, some say, is near
Madness, but the independent mind thinks on,
Breathing and burning, abstract as the air.

Joyce Carol Oates

Encores for a Dilettante
by Ursule Molinaro

(Braziller Fiction Collective; $8.95, $3.95 paper)

On his forty-fifth birthday (for *Encores* is partly about being forty-five) the hero wakes in a strange hotel room alone. His wife has deserted him to pursue her career as a concert harpist leaving him to pursue his as a philanderer. But his true career is that of a fantasist—less seducer than seduced. And it is to these adventures that he at once turns. To the dream he's just woken from, for instance, in which he's a concert violinist. Then memories through which his life emerges. An endless montage of girlfriends. A bitter, hilarious portrait of his "only wife" to whom he introduced his girlfriends so she'd feel superior to them. A thirty-fifth birthday fiction in which, skirtless/pantless, they all trample him with boots.

For he is a leg man, like Truffaut's "Man Who Loved Women." But while, likewise, his desire contains a touch of incest, his creator, more gently and wisely than Nabokov, seems to share Nabokov's view of Freudian explanations. So Molinaro pilots her dubious hero in her own way through memory and fantasy, the memory *of* fantasy, and then through straits of his own making into her novel's main world, a grandiose fantasia of memory in which the Eng. prof. jets curiously east through lag after lag racing to hijack time and find his retrocarnate selves.

Jeu d'esprit. Grand tour de force. But more: "... a device of his childhood ... to unmake a mistake by projecting himself to ... where the clocks had not yet reached the time at which the mistake had been made."

But forward or backward one thing leads to another, and while dropping Mickey Mouse watches as a peace gesture over Vietnam and then Pearl Harbor may not forestall wars or original sins, our hero gets *behind* those events into some priority that was always first: "He must fly against the sun. Deep into the past. & keep flying faster & faster; without stopping until his past materializes under the pressure of his speed. . . ."

In his mother's womb he "feels permeated with the unfulfilled desire to become ... [an] opera star," and "begs [his parents] to use birth control ... until he can be born famous. . . ."

"He" lifts up his skirt and "sees that he is a girl 8 or 9 years old," in a wheelchair, and "her" mother tells the tale of "The Little Caterpillar Who Didn't Believe in Butterflies."

Between lives he finds he is Beaufort, a 17th-Century printer and lady's man, Beaufort Hookker, hanged on his forty-fifth birthday on suspicion of denouncing his neighbors for wife-beating after the legal wife-beating hours. (Whose own wife had left him—"a sincerely committed citizen who fought 17th-Century monopolies with the Quixotic courage of a latter-day folder/stapler-/mutilator of computerized holy writs ..." and who sometimes "wishes he had been born a woman ... [so] he could live happily hidden behind the backs of men.") *Almost* hanged—for Molinaro, no doubt seeing that, "played backwards, tragedy looks ridiculous," ordains that his "fate can perhaps be more effectively corrected at an earlier stage."

Which translates us to 4th-Century Rome, to a gouty, musing high priest, Belfortis Hamus Verus on his XLV birthday, resigned to his wife's sodomy with a willing slave, and to having no answer for his genius son's Borgesian question, "'Supposing the world really is illusion. Then man as part of the world must be part of the illusion. How can illusion know it is illusion?'" But as Belfortis Hamus dies of a heart attack in the midst of religious doubt, Molinaro's hero is on his way again, back, back, toward a moment prior to those choices whence all failures come.

A "Happy Hermaphrodite" now, his parents fused in him ... himself a fertility symbol ... being worshipped.

From which we return to the hotel room, and a harpist wife disguised as a chambermaid, and a lyrical divorce which through a high window as mundane as room service astonishingly ends our trip. Its time-warped length is telescoped to 113 pages—room enough for Molinaro's quirky but warm and easy style in which each new sentence or half-sentence arises as an afterthought slyly continuing the firm flow, dilating

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upon all manner of subjects—autobiography, Christianity, historical determinism, the liberation of men and women, and Dilettante Power, which I take to be that repertoire of fantasy with which we create the possible.

Molinaro tells us that the barbed wire chicken coops of reality impale the ego's balloon. She means egotism, but all through *Encores* she invokes a larger, more moving sense of "ego" as "self." Thus she can smile at the self's lamentably poor chances of being whole and content. This plight is seen in the hero with his string of girlfriends, his wife, his lies, his rue, his hapless self-absorption amid the tangled egos of others which compose a universe where women and men do not live together any more fairly or easily than they ever did.

But the hero's consolation, if there be such, appears in those constant cast-changes with which Molinaro recomposes the elements of his life—his own and his wife's shifting identities, rebirths of all and sundry, from two pet cats on down through the human figures. And Molinaro's funny, scintillating reincarnations—even, I should think, for readers raised on regional realism—become the mind's incorrigible system recreating, restoring, reversing, rejoicing in multiples of unity.

Joseph McElroy

Joseph McElroy's most recent novel is *Plus* (Knopf).

Scientists Under Hitler: Politics and the Physics Community in the Third Reich by Alan D. Beyerchen

(Yale University Press; $17.50)

As is stated on the dust jacket of Alan D. Beyerchen's book, science during the Nazi regime has not been dealt with thoroughly by scholars because two different disciplines are involved; political historians left it to historians of science, who shied away because of the political intricacies. Beyerchen, who teaches history at the University of Florida in Gainesville, is evidently not deterred by interdisciplinary complexity, and has written an intelligent, balanced, sensitive, well-documented account.

He opens with the background: the structure and attitudes of German academia, the Weimar centers of physics, and the coming to power of the National Socialists. The book gets under way with the implementation of the 1933 Civil Service Law under which more than 25 percent of the academic physics personnel was dismissed. Beyerchen takes as case studies the responses of the Jewish directors of three of the four institutes for physics and mathematics in Göttingen: public resignation by James Franck, silent emigration by Max Born, and the attempt to hold out by Richard Courant. He then relates the toll at other centers. A table of Nobel laureates in science lists 19 who emigrated—a number which, for nearly all countries, is greater than their entire complement since the inception of the awards. "The result was an exodus of scientific talent unparalleled in recent history, for men like Franck, Born and Courant were among the best in their fields in Germany, and at that time German science was the best in the world," Beyerchen states. He reports a "joke" circulated at the time, based on the fact that the great mathematician David Hilbert had once received a blood transfusion from Courant: "There was only one Aryan mathematician in all of Göttingen and in his veins flowed Jewish blood."

The hero of the book is Max von Laue. He was the hero of my thesis adviser, Hartmut Kallmann, who never tired of telling us how, during his lengthy house arrest, von Laue would visit him and send books and journals—at great personal risk. We wondered how von Laue was able to maintain such defiance, and attributed it to his Nobel Prize and his von. Beyerchen cites von Laue's son as believing a more likely source of protection lay in important army connections. Von Laue's uncompromising stance was known abroad, to scientists at any rate. P.P. Ewald visited Einstein in the mid 1930s and asked if he could take any messages back to Germany:

> *"'Greet Laue for me.' Ewald named others, asking if they might be also included in the greetings. Einstein's answer was simply to repeat, 'Greet Laue for me.'"*

The most fascinating chapters for me were those titled "The Aryan Physicists" dealing with Philipp Lenard and Johannes Stark. I read them as if they were part of a whodunit, which, in a sense, they were. Unlike Hitler, whom I never sought to understand—as being beyond the limits of the understandable—Lenard and Stark were physicists, and not *mere* physicists: they had sufficient intellectual capacity to do experiments that earned them Nobel Prizes. Beyerchen ties the growing virulence and fanaticism of these two to their own sequences of failures and humiliations. And just as reading about the starvation of a large remote group does not reach us with the intensity that does the picture of a single bloated-bellied child, anti-Semitism can remain an abstraction until seen in the portrait of an individual anti-Semite.

According to Beyerchen, Lenard exhibited no anti-Semitism until well into his 50s. He began his career as the assistant of Heinrich Hertz, the half-Jewish discoverer of radio waves. When Hertz died, Lenard interrupted his own work to see to the publication of Hertz's book. This and other interruptions made him miss out—or think he had—on the discovery of X-rays, a particularly bitter disappointment because he had given advice on how to generate them, and had not been credited. Later, he again saw himself robbed of priority, this time by the English physicist J.J. Thomson. There was not only severe illness, pain, bungled treatment that resulted in deformity, the death of his son (due partly to malnutrition suffered during

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the British blockade in World War I), but also the loss of his savings (including the Nobel award) in the inflation.

Superimposed on these specific tragedies one senses a more general tragedy, a professional one, that of the obviously talented experimentalist who did not possess the mathematical facility to keep up with the growing mathematization of his field, which culminated in the spectacular theoretical achievement that was quantum mechanics. Lenard's bitterness fanned out from the individual Englishman he believed had wronged him to the whole of England, English science, and theoreticians, provoked, no doubt, by the tendency of many of the latter to regard experiment as the servant of theory. When the theory of relativity received experimental confirmation in 1919, making Einstein a world celebrity, all of Lenard's hatred focused on Einstein—a pacifist, an internationalist, a *theoretician*, now lionized by the hated English. Beyerchen states that Einstein's being Jewish was of little importance initially, but proved essential in eventually turning Lenard to anti-Semitism.

Stark also was a talented experimentalist, involved in priority disputes, who suffered a series of professional setbacks. His crowning humiliation was to see his discovery of the effect of electric fields on atoms—studied by all undergraduate physics students, and called the Stark effect—explained by the new quantum theory, which he did not accept. He, as well, concentrated his hatred on theory—which Einstein epitomized.

In the course of his analysis of Heisenberg (which continues into the conclusion of the book) Beyerchen gives us a glimpse of how some political decisions were made in the Third Reich. Heisenberg had been attacked by Stark in a newspaper in a way that could have meant the end of his career. Because Heisenberg's grandfather and SS leader Heinrich Himmler's father had both been secondary school principals in Munich, the families knew one another somewhat, and so Heisenberg's mother went to Himmler's mother for assistance. Beyerchen quotes from an interview in which Heisenberg recalled his mother's account:

". . . the elderly Mrs. Himmler said immediately 'My heavens, if my Heinrich only knew of this, then he would immediately do something about it. There are some slightly unpleasant people around Heinrich, but this is of course quite disgusting. But I will tell my Heinrich about it. He is such a nice boy—always congratulates me on my birthday and sends me flowers and such. So if I say just a single word to him, he will set the matter back in order."

But then Mrs. Himmler asks uncertainly if Mrs. Heisenberg believed that perhaps her son Heinrich was not on the right path in life. Heisenberg continued:

"I believe my mother acted very skillfully. . . . She must have answered somewhat like this: 'Oh you know, Mrs. Himmler, we mothers know nothing about politics—neither your son's nor mine. But we know that we have to care for our boys. That is why I have come to you.' And she understood that."

Throughout the bulk of the book Beyerchen presents the facts in as objective a fashion as can be expected of someone engaged in interpretation. Only on a few occasions does he permit himself editorial comment: "Aryan physics was a microcosm of National Socialism, a coalition of views just as irrational in form and nihilistic in content. It is a dangerous form of intellectual arrogance to believe that a movement must be rationally consistent in order to achieve political power."

In the extremely interesting conclusion of the book, which is entirely interpretive, Beyerchen takes on the question of resistance, and asks to what extent adherence to professional values constituted opposition to National Socialism, and answers: "To combat Lenard and Stark not because they were Nazis, but because they threatened the effectiveness and standards of German science, was professional opposition. But professional opposition to Nazi theory was not the same as political opposition to the Nazi regime. . . . And in an environment like that created by the Third Reich, political opposition is the only opposition worthy of the name." His reply to the argument given by some scientists that opposition would result—at best—in the loss of influence, is: "Trying to ascertain predictable consequences is a fundamental principle of scientific research. Often, however, this effort is paralyzing in politics, because the consequences of an action are unforseeable. In such cases,the sole basis for action must be moral and social responsibility. . . . Despite the example of von Laue, the basic reason so few scientists exhibited any evidence of resistance was that their goal of profes-

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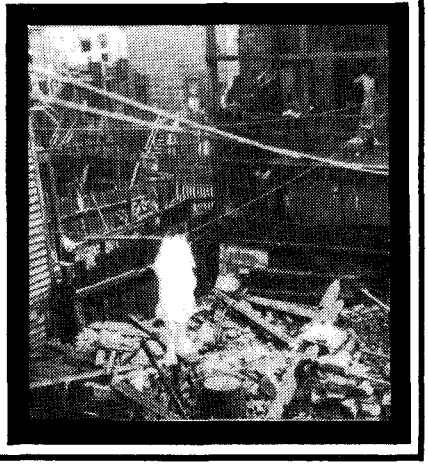

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sional autonomy did not demand it of them."

He adds: "Their actions were in complete accord with a set of standards we have come to recognize as too narrow. . . . The truth was not that the scientists were political cowards, but that they did not know how to be political heores."

Grace Marmor Spruch

Grace Marmor Spruch is professor of physics at Rutgers University.

The Perpetual Dream: Reform and Experiment in the American College by Gerald Grant and David Riesman

(University of Chicago Press; $15)

A decade ago, David Riesman and his young Harvard colleague, Christopher Jencks, brought us *The Academic Revolution*, a lucid account of the rise of professionalism in American higher education, and an analysis of its effects: increased professorial autonomy, departmental hegemony, and the dominance of the university—particularly its graduate programs—over the liberal arts college.

What Jencks and Riesman described was really the second academic revolution, in the wake of Sputnik, an expanded economy, and the coming of age of the postwar babies. The first, between 1870 and 1910, led to the standard American university model that lasted well into the 20th century. Its curriculum, the result of strategic compromises by strong presidents, accommodated both the British collegiate and Germanic research orientations, the defenders of what was then termed "liberal culture" and the new utilitarians: general education for the traditionalists, subject majors for the vocationalists, and free electives for everyone. Although there is no record of its use, "multiversity," the label suggested by some for The University of Chicago, captured much of the meaning of the later term.

While an alternative tradition was kept alive by reformers committed to their visions of classical liberal education (e.g., Meiklejohn, Hutchins), the academic boom of the 1950s and early '60s only strengthened the entrepreneurial institutions. By the time *The Academic Revolution* appeared, however, the multiversity was beginning to catch hell from all sides: the federal government, state legislatures, trustees, parents, and—most significantly—even students (with some faculty supporters.) A third revolution was brewing, and the body count of administrators rose as dramatically as the KIA's and MIA's in Southeast Asia. Students demanded "relevance," and a number of anti-university colleges were launched. In *The Perpetual Dream*, Riesman and another young collaborator, Gerald Grant—who went off to Harvard on a Nieman Fellowship as education editor of *The Washington Post* and emerged a college professor (now at Syracuse)—have provided us with some case histories of institutions that, in their different ways, came to stand against one or another characteristic of the multiversity.

Working inductively because of their conviction that American higher education manifests contradictory trends occurring simultaneously, Grant and Riesman developed a typology of reform movements that places recent developments in sociological and historical perspective. This is the same approach Riesman has used since *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), following his highly-tuned antennae to settings where he becomes immersed in fieldwork, checking his own interpretations against the insights of others, and any "hard" data he can find. Grant, who did the bulk of the fieldwork and wrote about two-thirds of the book, has written well for over 15 years, and has clearly learned a lot from Riesman. Six "enthnographies" that have resulted from this joint effort have been chosen to illustrate their conceptual scheme.

Grant and Riesman distinguish between "telic" and "popular" reforms. The former embody conceptions of the goals of undergraduate education that are significantly different from—even opposed to—those of the multiversity. St. John's College in Annapolis (and, since 1964, Santa Fe) is perhaps the exemplar of an institution with a distinctive mission. Reborn in 1937 under the leadership of Scott Buchanan and Stringfellow Barr, themselves greatly influenced by Meiklejohn and Hutchins, St. John's is an ideal type of what Grant and Riesman term the "neoclassical" college. The curriculum is entirely the study of the "Great Books," and one learns by becoming a full participant in the Socratic dialogue. With Aristotle and Aquinas, the end of knowledge is virtue: to know the good, and to choose it. A wholly different set of objectives is typified by the now-defunct Black Mountain, a college community whose end was the fostering of creativity and artistic expression. Although Grant and Riesman do not devote a chapter to Black Mountain—referring the reader to Martin Duberman's fine book—it is presented as the embodiment of another telic reform, the "aesthetic-expressive."

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The two other institutions chosen to illustrate telic reforms represent responses to the social changes of the '60s. Kresge College is one of the cluster colleges at what is arguably the most innovative public higher educational institution begun in this decade, The University of California at Santa Cruz. As the purest surviving institutional realization—a number of similar ventures have self-destructed—of the "communal-expressive" movement, Kresge is billed as "a living-learning community which concerns itself with the human as well as the intellectual needs of its members." With its religious and mystical overtones, and its emphasis on the techniques of the encounter group, Kresge seems to have sprung full-blown from the counter-culture that was going to green America.

A second dominant campus theme of the 1960s, student activism, is represented by The College for Human Services, on New York's lower West Side. Its students, predominantly black, Spanish-speaking, or recent Polish immigrants, are trained to work in the "helping professions" as agents of social change, to become client advocates skilled at cutting through bureaucratic red tape. Most readers will know little about CHS; many will first think of Antioch as the prototypical "activist-radical" college. And, in the '60s, it doubtless was. But the schisms of the student left, and its own expansionist ventures, have made Antioch something of a shambles. Grant and Riesman prepared a chapter on the College, but—as they diplomatically state—its "complex metamorphoses have outrun our own ability to keep pace."

With all of the differences among the institutions representing telic reforms—and the predictable disillusion among those whose unrealistic expectations could not be met—they have in common an opposition to the multiversity and the values it reflects: individual achievement, pluralism, the production of useful knowledge. The "popular"—or non-telic—reforms have also rejected much of what the multiversity stands for, but they represent efforts to attain traditional college goals through non-traditional means: open admissions, the abolition of fixed curricular requirements and parietal regulations, student-designed degree programs, credit for non-classroom learning—most of the many recent attempts to modify the processes of education while preserving institutional objectives the telic reformers find unacceptable.

In the second part of the book, Grant and Riesman take the measure of a variety of "popular" reforms, in the context of their "ethnographies" of New College, the initially private institution that has recently been absorbed by The University of South Florida; the cluster colleges at UC-Santa Cruz, an effort to marry Berkeley and Swarthmore; and two "experimental" state colleges in New Jersey, Ramapo and Stockton. Their overview of the causes and effects of the "popular" reforms that have been implemented on all but a handful of campuses contains the suggestion that student malaise is grounded in "meritocratic discontent," the frustration engendered by the pressures of competition in colleges and universities that continue to serve as sorting and credentialing agencies for a society no longer able to provide the rewards that have historically followed "success" in undergraduate and graduate or professional school. The greatest single effect has been increased autonomy for students, a freedom from requirements following the abdication of authority by faculty and administrators, caught up as they are with professional and institutional survival. But the overoptioned life of today's students has made them feel, paradoxically, less free, since the clearly-defined standards of the past no longer exist.

Grant and Riesman point out many such paradoxes of reform. Indeed, it is an animating principle of *The Perpetual Dream*: the title is meant to convey the effervescent quality of higher education in America, in which cycles of reform ebb and flow. The danger of the popular reforms is the erosion of standards and the potential for an intellecutal community grounded in a shared curricular experience. Colleges such as Evergreen State, Hampshire, and Empire State have been valuable ventures in innovation. But their reforms were not telic: faculty and administrators shared no common vision of what a college ought to be. Increasing the options has resulted in curricular incoherence and faculty who are concerned with burning out.

The telic reforms—to which Grant and Riesman are more sympathetic, for the boldness of their vision, even while noting their excesses and failures—run the risk of evoking cynicism when their lofty aspirations fall short. Debunking seems endemic to the American character, perhaps nowhere more so than among academics. In refusing to overlook the uncritical utopianism and sentimentality of such ventures, Grant and Riesman are concerned with tempering unrealistic expectations with "a sober sense of the realities and dilemmas of reform, without paralyzing either experiment or renewal." If students in the late 1960s were naive in their fantasies of omnipotence, those of the '70s have reacted to their predecessors' failure to "change the system" with fantasies of powerlessness. And this is dangerous—for them and for the colleges and universities that need their idealism.

The Perpetual Dream is, with Riesman's earlier work, an example of what Robert Nisbet has termed "sociology as an art form." Mistaking Nisbet's meaning, critics of Grant and Riesman can be expected to so label their work, using the phrase pejoratively. Riesman's "ethnographic" method has always provoked criticism, particularly from social scientists who demand to "see his data." But this is to miss the point. Riesman simply

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does not work their way. And for this we should be grateful: data-mongerers we have in abundance, but fewer than a computer card column of those with the shrewdness of insight, breadth of vision, and informed commitment that Riesman continues to provide. And Gerald Grant is a worthy colleague.

Theirs is an important book as we begin the reassessment of undergraduate education that disenchantment with recent reforms has generated. The pendulum is swinging back again. Tradition is the latest reform. A Harvard committee report urging a new core curriculum is front page news in the *Times*. Whether we shall witness yet another academic revolution remains to be seen. (A prolonged bargaining among the various interest groups is a better bet.) As the debate rages, we should do well to keep in mind the lessons of *The Perpetual Dream*.

Robert Hassenger

Robert Hassenger is at Empire State College, where he directs the Independent Study program of The State University of New York.

Reconsideration

Belchamber
by Howard Sturgis
(originally published in 1904)

(1976 reprints: Fertig; $14, AMS Press; $18)

Howard Sturgis, a blond (and later silvered), mustached, heavy-limbed man of middle height, was described both as handsome and unprepossessing and compared by his cousin George Santayana—who thought him gifted, courageous, and ridiculously effeminate—to a figurine. In *The Last Puritan* Santayana returns to this image and tells what it signified to him. Mario, said to be based on Sturgis, is half Italian, half American, a schoolboy at Eton, an outsider with bravura and know-it-all glibness. Behind his foreignness are hints of a Chinese figurine, "all ivory and silk," dancing the moment he comes alive, reciting verses, and with his laughter deflating "everything in this ridiculous real world." There is no question that the author of *Belchamber* saw himself as an outsider and that humor and wit and anger worked for him as he went about deflating the insiders.

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He was an alien in subtle ways having nothing to do with nationality. His effeminacy irritated Santayana, perhaps because he was a bachelor and felt his own masculinity was under silent examination. Sturgis himself never went through the motions of pretending to be a "normal." He knitted, crocheted, and embroidered and was put out when E. M. Forster, who admired his novels, showed a lackluster appreciation of his needlework. If Sturgis read Edward Carpenter and other contemporaries interested in the phenomenon of the Intermediate Sex, he saw his gift of intuition, his gentleness and dislike of violence, his delight in the arts, his talent for nursing, his cheerful cultivation of female friendship as well as male, graphically summed up. And had he lived to read *The Well of Loneliness* he would have found himself skilfully hit off in the character of Jonathan Brockett, a playwright with broad shoulders, curiously small white hands, most vulnerable nerves, and a habit of praising and insulting in a single breath.

Edith Wharton considered Sturgis's table talk superior to Henry James's. The first and least professional Sturgis novel, issued when the author was 36, has the easy style of a man whose conversations had fascinated a variety of judges running the gamut from the friendly James to the unfriendly Santayana. *Tim* (1891), a quiet story with nostalgic Etonian scenes, was a delicate—and for many readers in the pre-Freudian era invisible—approach to the sexual problems of children and adolescents. "Passing the love of women," says the title character in a deathbed speech colored by memories of a chapel sermon and explaining why he had sacrificed himself for his slightly older friend, Carol Darley. Carol is a jock, handsome in a thoroughly Saxon way, good-natured, universally popular, and divested of his storybook glamor by the author's simple remark that "Carol was not fond of making himself unhappy." For all that, there is more sentimentality in *Tim* than today's readers are likely to swallow.

Despite its title *All That Was Possible* (1895) is neither Victorian melodrama nor Trollopean romance. It is an often witty story narrated by a former showgirl who has been thrown over by her London lover and hopes to recuperate from her disappointments in a rural and, as she discovers, ultra-respectable and ultra-intolerant Wales. A Welsh businessman who seems on the point of making her an old-fashioned offer proves to be shockingly new-fashioned, gives the quietus to her illusions about men in general and the chivalrous in particular, and speeds her return to London. If her story is too small for its frame, the theme is nevertheless a moving one, for Sibyl Crofts is the victim of a class system that treats her moral standards as gratuitous and believes music-hall actresses were born to be undone by the first youth who has a shilling to spare.

In *Belchamber* Sturgis used a larger frame and filled every inch of it. Up to this point only a smattering of his social experiences had entered into what he wrote and only a hint that behind his shyness lay a broad knowledge of England's upper classes and an uncanny talent for mimicking speech from every social level. Inherited wealth, to be sure, circumscribed his range. His father, a roving Great Merchant in the words of Santayana, was an American who had carried away riches from China, married two or three times, and settled in London as "the entertaining partner" of a famous banking firm. Howard, the youngest and most dependent son of these marriages, nursed his parents through years of illness, lived with his widowed mother in Italian pensions, and after her death took his life in hand for

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the first time, made remarks interpreted as liberal or even socialistic, tried a friendlier tack with family servants, and set up a home near Windsor Great Park that brought the world—or a quite representational part of it, including loads of American relatives and unrelated freeloaders, dandies, dowagers, eminent writers, and university dons—to his door. For, if he was too much the esthete to build a better mousetrap, he was a free-spending and witty host.

The world Sturgis depicted in *Belchamber* was narrower than his own, as caste-ridden in fact as Thackeray's, even idler and more pleasure-ridden, and deserving to be saved from flood and fire only because there had been a shedding and shredding of religious hypocrisy. Sainty, the protagonist of *Belchamber,* is the author's vision of what he might have been had family traditions orginating in the Middle Ages surrounded his life and encouraged his native passivity. A Tim n idealism and humility, Sainty has the titles of marquis, earl, and baron to deck out his unattractive person, miserable health, and a puritanical mother who misjudges the worth of people far and near, including her own sons. The little marquis is from the beginning low-spirited, timid, bookish, fond of needlework, horrified by field sports that are an orgy of life-taking, and as uneasy with horses as early Christians were said to be with lions. A pony throws and tramples the boy, turning him into a lifelong cripple, reinforcing his sense of unfitness, and convincing him that just fates have ticketed him for an early death. His titles and estate would thereupon go to his younger brother Arthur.

In each of the Sturgis novels there is an Arthur, handsome, athletic, at one with the world, and more notable for his outer graces than his inner ones. Sainty's brother is the worst of the lot—a good socialist argument for putting rich men's sons to work, maybe a good Communist argument for the salt mines. To punish his mother for ordering him to abandon a sinful connection with a showgirl, Arthur marries her. Sainty's own marriage is an answer to Arthur's, an effort to please his distracted mother and give Belchamber an heir who would keep the showgirl and her children at bay, thereby rescuing "one of the most beautiful places in England" from ruinous change. Practicality, however, isn't Sainty's line and he falls into the hands of a fortune hunter who disdains craft and lays out a bear trap to catch her rabbit.

Sainty himself has no doubts about being a rabbit. He regrets "his miserable inherent effeminacy," recognizes that his sexual attractions are nil, and is grimly amused after he has been accepted that it is his future mother-in-law rather than his bride-to-be who kisses him. The amusement ebbs and Cicely Eccleston's delayed kiss, a cool thank-you for the engagement ring he gives "his intended," is "like the stamp on a receipt for cash value received."

Cicely is Becky Sharp with malice and candor added. She keeps Sainty at a distance on their wedding night—no athletic feat, this—but his stoicism is shaken in the midst of their unconsummated marriage when she admits that a child is on the way. To fend off scandal (and perhaps to show readers that he literally accepts the injunction, "Resist not evil") Sainty pretends that the child is his own. A sense of fatherhood soon creeps over Sainty and in his eagerness to safeguard the neglected little boy he achieves a strength and a hint of backbone novel to him. The boy's sudden death touches Cicely as an invitation to be free and she is preparing to go away with her lover when long-asleep poetic justice comes forward.

A.C. Benson though Sturgis had all the gifts of a great novelist, lacking only the goad in the back that made a Dickens or a Balzac run. If *Belchamber* is a classic, as E. M. Forster held it to be, it is partly because it has the force of a confession: for once we recognize the goad in the back and sense that the book had to be written. Sturgis grew tired of the geniality that left him at the mercy of every stray parasite and complained that the eternal guests who came to dinner were reducing him to a hotel manager. There was also the embarrassment of a sensitive man who knew he was saddled forever with his effeminacy and felt the need of an apologia. Santayana believed much of this effeminacy was akin to hypnosis and that Sturgis the adult had brought forth from his unconscious a whole collection of feminine voices, gestures, and movements learned in childhood during his wanderings between his mother's boudoir and drawing room. He was sufficiently self-aware, however, to write in moving terms of Sainty's contempt for what his mother called his sexlessness.

Though *Belchamber* is far from being a direct ancestor of *The Well of Loneliness, Giovanni's Room,* or *The City and the Pillar,* which offers a slew of slang terms, circa 1948, cataloguing every known type of deviate, Sturgis asks his readers in effect to tolerate rather than arraign human diversity. Henry James, who had granted the he o of *The Wings of the Dove* physical passion, took a rather surprising tack and complained that there wasn't a word in *Belchamber* about Sainty's physiology. Critics in general, however, ignored the omissions and argued that Sturgis had wasted his gifts of language on a thoroughly disagreeable subject.

Having spent 10 years in what could only be a Sisyphean effort to bring *Belchamber* to perfection, Sturgis felt the strictures of James—because he was *the* Master—were damning as nothing in the press had been, wrote no more novels, and, in Edith Wharton's phrase, "relapsed into knitting and embroidery." A Tolstoyan acceptance crowned Sturgis's "native indolence and genuine humility" (to quote Mrs. Wharton again), and in the aftermath of an unsuccessful cancer operation he remarked, "I'm enjoying dying very much."

Enjoyment is one of the keys to Sturgis. Another is Santayana's image of the dancing figurine modeled in the Chinese manner and abnormally sensitive to the ridiculous. The elegant though comfortable prose might have been composed by a plump little mandarin. And only a writer fascinated with the ridiculous could have invented the partygoers who poured champagne down a singer's piano or the baptized Jew "who instead of not attending the synagogue now stayed away from church." Most ridiculous of all perhaps is the quixotic Sainty. While his dislike of violence saves him from dangerous tiltings at windmills, his abiding innocence and humility, sympathy with the foolish and the vicious, and readiness to condemn himself as he threads his way through the ranks of the insensitive, make us fearful. More Jamesian than the Master in hinting at melodrama yet keeping it at arm's length, Sturgis is an absolute modern in stirring up tensions on behalf of one of the quietest heroes in British fiction.

James Walt

James Walt is professor of English at the University of Maryland.

Coming:
William Saroyan
on
picking grapes
in the south of
France

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Brief Reviews

American Ballet Theatre by Charles Payne

(Knopf; $35)

The American Ballet Theatre has been fortunate in its photographers: Kertész, Beaton, Avedon, Penn, Okamoto, Van Vechten, and other less-known folk with at least equal talent. There is no way that an album of the ABT could have been anything but stunning, sensuously so. This book is much more, however, not least because its editor (and editor of other ballet books that both gleam and illumine), Robert Gottlieb, has lavished on it scruples and attention rare for the genre. Gottlieb is a ballet militant (no less intense characterization will quite do) serving Balanchine and the New York City Ballet with devotion and tough-minded discernment. Loyalties tend to be exclusive in the serious ballet world where style and personality, doctrine and history, divide deeply. Gottlieb's magnificent presentation of the *other* great companies is itself, then, a triumph of sorts. The texts help a lot, of course: the introductory materials by Charles Payne especially, and the personal memoirs of various principals in the Ballet Theatre's history. Sometimes the writing is as vivid and riveting as a well-executed *grand jeté*; when it is not, a significant detail recalled—or even a catty observation—almost compensates.

Ballet in America now suffers from the indiscriminate enthusiasms of its audience. This volume will not add to this contagion. But it does explain something of the inner and institutional lives of the Makarovas and Baryshnikovs of our time. And it tells a good deal about the agonies and rewards of those who live by the distinctive discipline and poetry of the body.

M.P.

The Dragon and the Eagle United States-China Relations: Past and Future edited by Michel Oksenberg and Robert B. Oxnam.

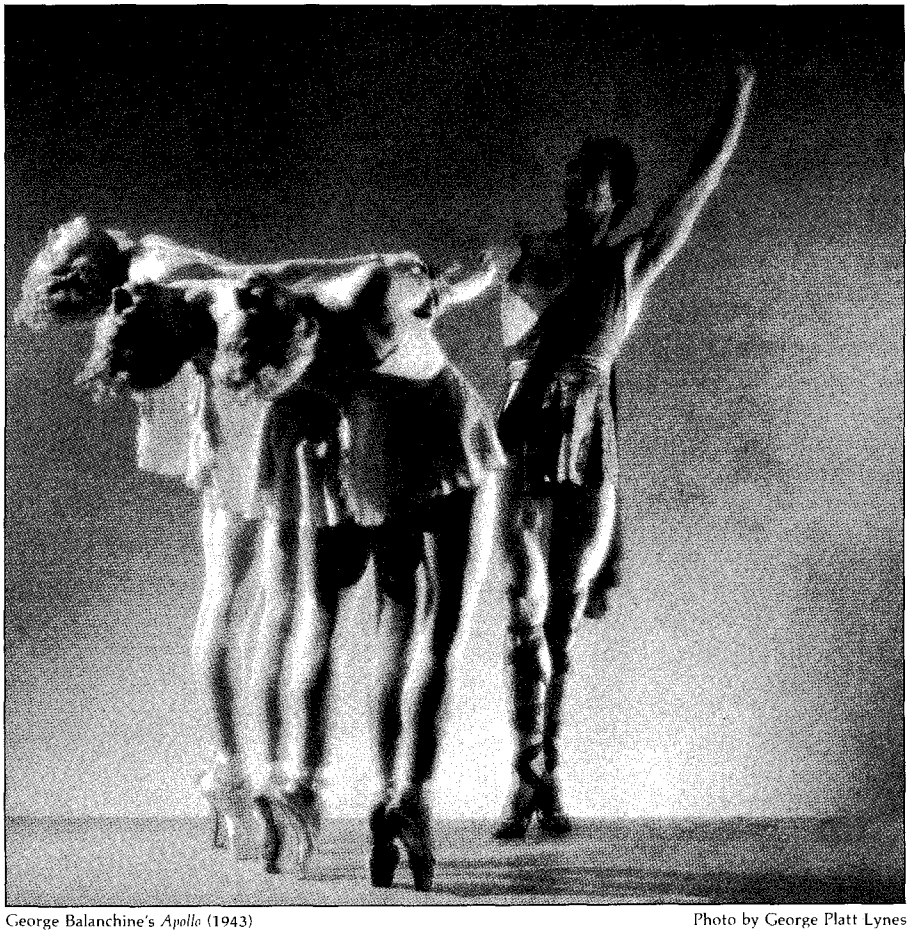
(Basic Books; $13.50)

American political concern with China comes and goes like the Loch Ness monster—a doubtful sighting, a flurry of search, then silence. President Nixon made reopening relations with China one of his foreign policy priorities, which resulted in his "historic" trip to China in February 1972. For President Carter there remained the task of resurrecting the spirit of the Shanghai communique, which promised to normalize American relations with Peking.

So inevitably, what President Carter's China advisor, Michel Oksenberg, thinks about our future relation with China is the principal reason one is attracted to this collection. In the opening essay, Oksenberg outlines the areas of common US and China interests. As neither side has much leverage over the other, the relationship will grow slowly. "The establishment of full diplomatic relations will be but one step in a much longer process, and will not eliminate the strain in Sino-American affairs." Elsewhere, he muses that ". . . one could envision Taiwan as a prosperous entity with which the United States retains a full range of economic and cultural ties and which contributes to rather than threatens Chinese security and economic interests."

The 13 contributors deal with bilateral interactions, multilateral interactions, and interactions around China's rim. For serious students of the China scene, all these interactions are vital preparation for the next sighting of the monster.

R.M.



George Balanchine's *Apollo* (1943) Photo by George Platt Lynes

Correspondence, *from page 5*

though belatedly, "I think we ought to stop here."

No reader will have trouble with my chronology on the sacking of Allen Dulles. After the mention of the Bay of Pigs, I mentioned in parenthesis the Nepal nonsense with which I had to contend; this was in the early summer of 1961. I was not, in fact, subject to any embarrassing pressure from Harry Rositzke, the head of the CIA in India when I arrived and in New Delhi one of the least clandestine figures in the history of intelligence operations. He has indeed written a very interesting book.

There was an error in my reference to those overflights to Nepal. Bangkok as the approximate place of origin got transcribed as Bangladesh and alert *TNR* editors made that, as it then was, into Bengal. I confess this as a special gesture to Mr. Wade. No one is infallible. The expert critic can sometimes find errors in even the most careful work.

John Kenneth Galbraith
Harvard University

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"And the stones from the wall will scream."
(Habakuk 2:11)

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Washington Diarist

Lots of letters to *TNR* lately have complained about a "shift to the right." These letters tell us a lot about the state of the American left. For a long time, the left has had a free ride, largely because its enemies were so clearly identified with evil: the Vietnam War and then Watergate. One had only to spell out the horrors of one's opponents, with a few passing references to social problems, and the position was unassailable. The left even ran a "pure" candidate against Nixon in 1972, and had the great fortune to lose the election and then win the political war. Now the left has come to power, announced that national policy will henceforth be conducted on a higher moral plane . . . and made a mess of things. I don't think this was an accident. The crux of the matter is that the left is slipping back into an earlier mold, which was well described by Lewis Mumford in this magazine in 1940:

> *The liberal's notion that reasoning in the spirit of affable compromise is the only truly human way of meeting one's opponents overlooks the important part played by force and grace. And his unctuous notion that evil must not seriously be combated because the person who attempts to oppose it may ultimately have to use physical force, and will become soiled by the act of fighting, is a gospel of despair . . . . To surrender in advance, to take no step because one may make a false step, is to pursue an illusory perfection and to achieve an actual paralysis.*

Mumford was talking about America's unwillingness to fight Nazism and Fascism and Stalinism, but the words are entirely appropriate to our current mood of "affable compromise" all over the world. Fewer spectacles are as depressing as the silence of the American left over our appalling performance at the Belgrade Conference on human rights, and our national silence regarding the oppression of human beings throughout the "socialist" world. We should be talking about the achievements of the American revolution, instead we have an ideological inferiority complex, and when Europeans like Jean François Revel take up the cudgels for our side, we brand them as reactionaries.

Part of the problem is that we don't study the rest of the world, so much of our own uniqueness never registers. Our foreign correspondents rarely speak the language of the country they live in, and hardly ever know anything about its history and culture. Thus, the world always sounds like an extension of the United States. Political debates in, say, Spain, sound just like those in Washington when we read about them in our national press. But there is a world of difference between Madrid and Washington, and there ought to be some way for our press to explain that. Take terrorism, for example. *The New York Times* (like last week's Diarist) deals with terrorism in Italy in the usual language: frustrated, unemployed young people, angry at a corrupt government and a "sell-out" Communist party, take to the streets. Nowhere does one read about the unbelievable ideological categories that define the political debate in Italy (or about the Italian trade unions' call for vigilante committees following the kidnapping of Aldo Moro—a kind of mass terrorism, if carried out).

Or take discussions of foreign policy in this country. For the most part, they aren't discussions of policy at all; they're disputes over personalities. Is Brzezinski or Vance number-one in town these days? Does Begin's personality make peace in the Middle East impossible? What is the psychological profile of the next generation of Russian leaders? Some of these discussions are important, but they are no substitute for the examination of the basic questions. Once upon a time the left prided itself on a careful analysis of the "underlying forces." Now real political conflict is avoided, and issues are used as means for personal aggrandizement. I keep thinking about the architect who designed the Palace of Justice in Rome: when he saw the building, he committed suicide. Can you imagine anybody in Washington doing that? When someone resigns in protest over a question of principle, he's considered bizarre.

Another aspect of the crisis of the left comes over the question of public schools. The *TNR* editorial a few weeks ago, heroically urging people to send their children to public schools (and opposing government help for those who prefer private schools) is a typical example of refusing to look the problem squarely in the face. No one with school-age children could feel responsible sending them to the dreadful public schools in the District of Columbia. And it's outrageous to attack parents who sacrifice to send their kids to private schools. If you want to face the rea problem, then figure out some way t make the public schools safe for huma consumption. But once you do *that* yo discover a dirty little secret: you can save the schools without performin major surgery on the society itself. Th schools are just a symptom, like so man other things. One of the social problem reflected in the schools is the abandor ment of standards of excellence, and thi in turn is part of the general collapse c our belief in the underlying rightness c our national values and institutions. A Mumford observes, we act as if onl perfection is worth attaining, and whe we fail to achieve perfection we dam the whole system. The abandonment c high standards, and the increasin resort to racial quotas, are very seriou matters. Racial selection, in particular, i a time bomb. No one has written abou the mood in the Department of State where the Foreign Service Examinatio is no longer what it once was. If yo belong to the correct group, you can d poorly on the exam and still get a goo job at State. This suggests that policy i going to suffer, and morale along with i

To get back to all those letters, I have th uncomfortable feeling that many c *TNR*'s critics these days really want t stop defending Israel, stop attackin Communism, and get back to preachin the old sermon of the late 1960s: We ar the enemy. It certainly would be eas enough to do that, but it just isn't tru We are sometimes our own wors enemies, and we certainly wreak a grea deal of havoc on the world, but we aren anywhere near the top of the Enemies c Humanity list. The American left ha above all, the responsibility of identify ing and explaining the increasing er croachment on human freedom, an then proposing ways of defendin freedom. It is a sad commentary on us a that this theme has become considered reactionary one in fashionable circles i this country. Why didn't the left insis that the human rights campaign b pursued? But the left prefers attackin our nasty allies to criticizing our nast enemies, and generally considers huma rights a "cold war" theme. No wonde our allies are in confusion. A European know put it perfectly: the trouble wit an alliance with the United States is tha you never know when the American are going to stab themselves in the back

Michael Ledeen

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IBM Reports

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by Sy Levin.

I'm an advertising copywriter. And I had an assignment to create a message about the cost effectiveness of pharmaceuticals. In other words, that you get back what you pay for them.

I was reviewing the literature when I realized it was talking about me. I have high blood pressure.

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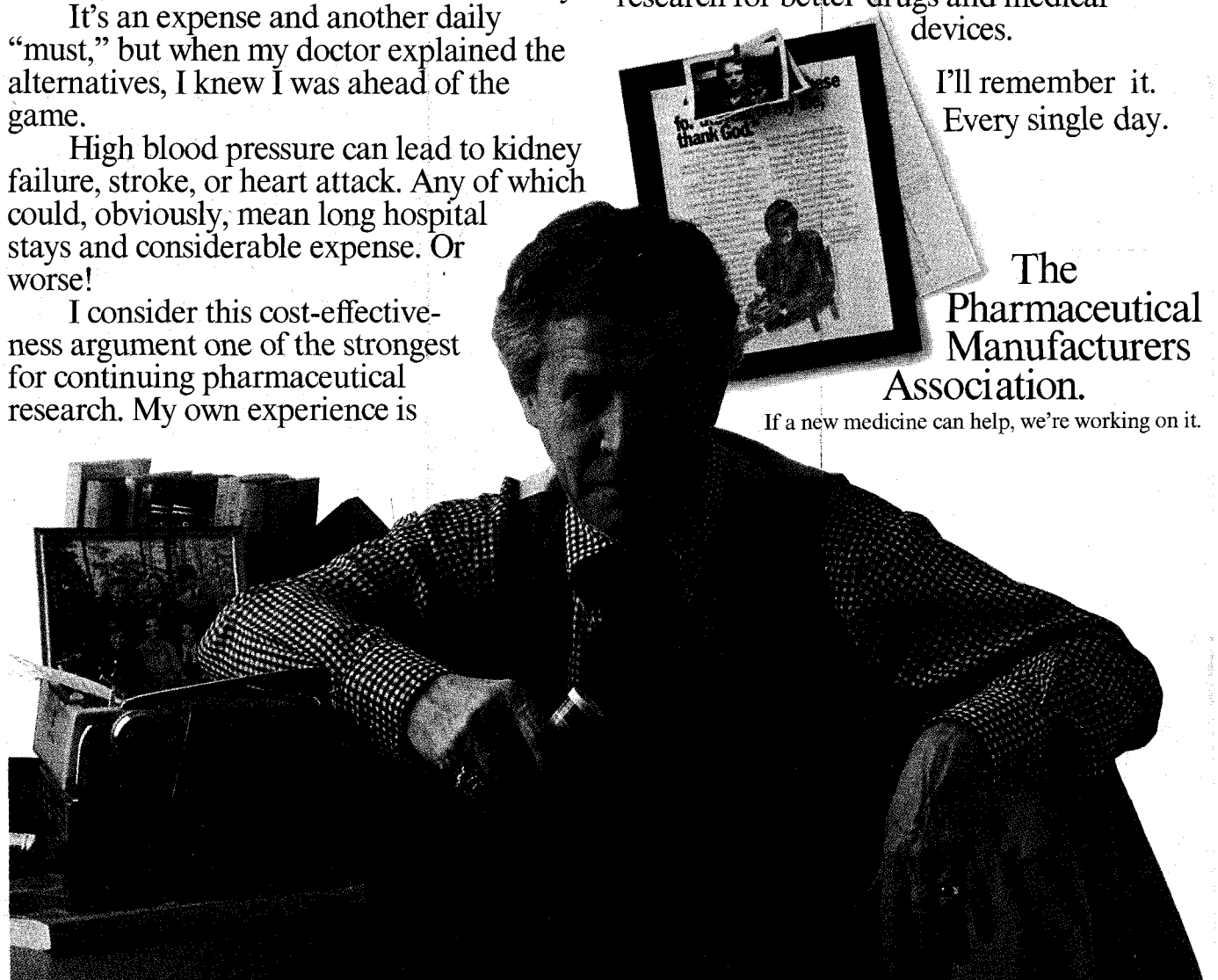

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